

# STARS AND STRIPES®

**DOD faces rising costs with dollar drop**

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**Snow covers U.S. from Midwest to Northeast**

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**What to do when saying 'I do' overseas**

Scene magazine

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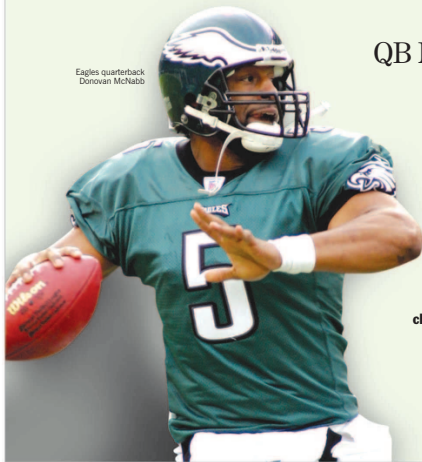
# DOD offers bonuses to Special Ops forces

\$168M package aimed at stopping troops from going civilian

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## 4th and goal in Philly

Eagles quarterback  
Donovan McNabb



**QB McNabb, Eagles face Falcons in latest chance at NFC title as road to Super Bowl narrows**

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■ Complete preview of AFC, NFC championships, including features, position-by-position matchups, predictions and more  
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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY PETER PHOTIKOE  
Stars and Stripes/AP photos



Steelers' Ben Roethlisberger, left, Patriots' Tom Brady

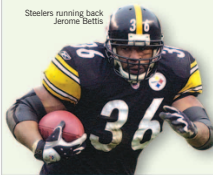
**Roethlisberger, Brady took similar paths to playoffs**

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**Steelers' backs know disappointment in title games**

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Steelers running back  
Jerome Bettis



STARS &amp; STRIPES

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## News Tracker ... What's new with old news

## States

**Human smuggling case:** The much-delayed trial of a New York man accused of driving and abandoning a tractor-trailer in the nation's deadliest human smuggling attempt will begin Tuesday in Houston unless the Supreme Court intervenes, a judge has ruled.

The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals on Friday denied a request from Tyrone Williams' attorneys to rehear allegations of racial bias in the case.

Williams is accused of driving the tractor-trailer that was abandoned in May 2003 at a truck stop. Seventeen immigrants were found dead inside the sealed trailer, two more died later.

**Robert Blake trial:** Actor Robert Blake was disappointed he couldn't get Bonny Lee Bakley out of his life but never asked that she be harmed, according to a man who said he tried unsuccessfully at Blake's behest to have Bakley arrested.

"He was upset that I hadn't been able to do what he wanted," Luis Mendoza testified Friday at Blake's murder trial.

On cross-examination, the defense got Mendoza to acknowledge that not only did Blake not ask him to kill his wife, he didn't ask him to do anything illegal.

**Andrea Yates conviction:** Prosecutors want an appeals court to reconsider its order for a new trial for Andrea Yates, who was convicted of drowning her children in the family bathtub.

In a motion filed Thursday, Harris County, Texas, prosecutors said a three-judge panel of the First Court of Appeals erred when it overturned Yates' capital murder convictions earlier this month.

The panel sided with Yates' lawyers, who contended false testimony from a prosecution expert witness contributed to her 2002 capital murder convictions for killing three of her children. She was sentenced to life in prison.

**Ray Charles' child support:** The mother of Ray Charles' 17-year-old son drastically reduced her request for child support Friday, apologizing to a judge for previously seeking at least \$60,000 a month.

Mary Ann den Bok had initially asked for \$3,000 a month for Corey Robinson den Bok, then demanded at least \$60,000 to pay for "the lifestyle he enjoyed" before his father's death June 10. On Friday, den Bok said she is now asking for \$12,000 to \$15,000.

**Los Alamos lab shutdown:** One of the nation's leading nuclear weapons laboratories is ready to resume normal operations after security and safety lapses last summer forced a shutdown of hazardous, high-risk operations at the lab.

Los Alamos National Laboratory Director Pete Nanos told employees Wednesday it should "look like a normal day" at the New Mexico lab by Jan. 31, with "productive work proceeding without impediment."

**"Morning-after" pill:** The government has delayed a decision about whether to allow women to buy the so-called "morning-after"



**Jackson molestation case:** Defense attorney Thomas Mesereau Jr. walks past protesters as he arrives for a pretrial hearing in the Michael Jackson child molestation case in Santa Maria, Calif., on Friday. The judge in the case gave prosecutors permission Friday to introduce testimony about child-molestation misperceptions and myths during the pop star's trial. Jackson's attorneys argued against allowing such testimony, saying that it could be used to buttress unreliable testimony from the alleged victim and his family.

birth control pill over the counter but hopes to act soon, the manufacturer said Friday.

**Cuban boy lawsuits:** A federal judge has set a Monday trial for the claims of a dozen people who said they were wrongly assaulted by federal officers during the raid that removed Elian Gonzalez from his family's home in Miami.

The plaintiffs say they were innocent bystanders who were gassed and beaten outside the home during the early morning raid on April 22, 2000.

## Business

**Fannie Mae's reporting woes:** Mortgage giant Fannie Mae is eliminating 2004 performance bonuses for 43 top executives, a move that will save the company millions of dollars, as it struggles to deal with major financial reporting problems.

The nation's biggest backer of home mortgages disclosed the move late Friday in a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission. It said its board of directors had voted this week to eliminate cash bonuses that have been paid to top executives for hitting last year's performance goals.

## War on terrorism

**Gitmo prisoner abuse:** The Navy's inspector general will review newly public documents regarding the treatment of prisoners held overseas to see if there is any call for an investigation, the Pentagon said Friday.

Many of the documents were obtained by the American Civil Liberties Union and disclosed in December. Several are messages from FBI agents discussing what they described as improper treatment of suspected terrorists held at the U.S. military base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz sought the review, which will be conducted by Vice Admiral Ronald Rostie.

## World

**Asian bird flu deaths:** Vietnam on Saturday reported two more bird flu deaths, bringing the human toll to nine in three weeks, as leaders of the World Health Organization planned to discuss preparations for a possible global flu pandemic.

The United States submitted a special request to WHO's executive board asking it to discuss bird flu at its current meeting in Geneva. It stressed the importance of strengthening outbreak surveillance, producing a vaccine and formulating an international plan to prepare for a possible pandemic.

**Egyptian nuclear activities:** U.N. nuclear inspectors toured an Egyptian laboratory during a review of the country's fuel programs prompted by irregularities in Egypt's reporting of its nuclear activities, a Western diplomat said Friday.

The diplomat said on the condition of anonymity that the tour by International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors was part of the agency's follow-up to revelations that Egypt had dabbled in uranium enrichment and had contemplated processing plutonium.

Inspectors would be going back on regular tours in the coming weeks, he said.

**Big Brazilian baby:** A baby born this week in northeastern Brazil weighing nearly 17 pounds is "doing great," hospital officials said Friday.

Doctors at the Albert Sabin Maternity Hospital in Salvador, 900 miles northeast of Sao Paulo, said Ademilton was being closely monitored by medical staff.

"He's doing great," pediatrician Luiz Serra said. "Of course, there are some special concerns because of his weight."

Francisca dos Santos Ramos, 38, gave birth Tuesday to 16-pound, 11-ounce Ademilton, the biggest baby ever delivered at the hospital.

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# Dollar's drop could create COLA quandary

In a time of budget cuts, DOD may face soaring COLA costs if euro's surge continues

**Editor's note:** With the dollar at near all-time lows, the cost of buying goods and services off base is hitting the American military community hard. Stars and Stripes is running stories in an occasional series to show how Americans are coping — and what the government is doing to help — with these pocketbook issues.

BY TERRY BOYD

Stars and Stripes

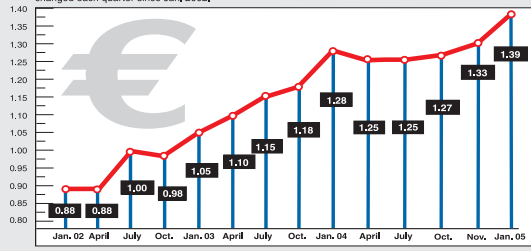
As President Bush's second term begins, controlling defense spending may become one of the most contentious issues. Even as the Bush administration ponders cutting \$6 billion during 2006, including expensive new weapons systems, the falling dollar may end up negating some of those savings.

Bush administration officials will have to ask Congress for billions in contingency money for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan above the \$400 billion or so expected 2006 Department of Defense budget appropriations request. Should the dollar continue its fall as analysts, investment gurus and currency traders predict — the DOD may have to scramble for supplemental funding, including for the accounts that pay for maintaining the quality of life and buying power of 340,000 or so U.S. troops and DOD civilians stationed overseas.

As the dollar drops against foreign currency, it makes the cost of basing U.S. military personnel in Europe and Asia all the more expensive. For example, every time the euro rises one euro cent in value against the dollar, the dollar increase in salary and benefits for local-national employees at the Navy Exchanges is \$187,000 adjusted annually, according to Lt. Cmdr. Lisa Braun, spokeswoman for Navy Region Europe in Naples, Italy. Last fiscal year, the Navy Exchanges lost \$1.1 million in local-national employee benefits because of the weak dollar, according to Braun. If the dollar dropped to the point that it cost as much as \$2 for one euro, then Installation Management Agency-Europe, which oversees all U.S. installations in Europe, could be faced with an estimated \$17 million to \$20 million "must

## Dollar falls flat

Troops living in Europe are seeing more money in their paychecks as the Defense Department increases its cost-of-living allowance, COLA. As it is known, it is indirectly tied to the euro, which had made big gains against the dollar in the last three years, hitting an all-time high this month. Here is a look at how the euro rate has changed each quarter since Jan. 2002.



Source: 266th Finance Command, U.S. Army

Stars and Stripes

fund" bill, according to Millie Waters, spokeswoman for the IMA-E headquarters in Heidelberg, Germany. That bill would have to be paid by the Department of the Army. If not, various quality-of-life services such as Morale, Welfare and Recreation, or infrastructure projects would potentially be unfunded, Waters said.

The dropping dollar also has a dramatic impact on leave-and-earnings statements. To maintain the buying power of those military personnel overseas, the Department of Defense gives cost-of-living increases, as well as living quarters allowances to those living off base.

In 2000, the overseas COLA program cost the government about \$1 billion, with an average supplement of \$297 per month, according to the Web site, [www.militarypay.com](http://www.militarypay.com).

But allowances increased dramatically as the dollar fell over the last two years, including about a 10 percent drop just since last September.

In December 2003, for example, a married sailor at pay grade E-7 without children in Naples, Italy, received \$980.12 in COLA. This November, the same chief petty of-

ficer received about \$1,125 based on today's COLA rate. If he had two children, he'd receive about \$1,300.

In Germany, an E-5 with 10 years in and two dependents got a November COLA increase to \$785 from \$600 the previous year per month, according to Army finance officials.

Multiplies that COLA sampling across the globe, and you're talking billions of dollars if the dollar falls further.

So where does all that money come from?

The currency fluctuation account provides the DOD a budgetary allowance for currency value changes that affect not only COLAs, but other benefits such as overseas housing allowances and fuel costs, according to military budget expert Steve Strobbridge in an e-mail reply to a Stars and Stripes query.

"If the dollar drops so much... that budgetary allowance is used up, then DOD would either have to absorb the extra cost within the DOD budget or, if the difference were significant enough, address it in the annual supplemental funding request to Congress," wrote Strobbridge, a retired Air Force colonel who worked at the U.S. Air Force headquarters as the chief of the entitlements department. He is now director of government relations, for the Military Officers Association of America, a Virginia-based non-profit association of retired officers.

In any event, Strobbridge stated, "there is no worry that somehow DOD will be held hostage and won't be able to keep adjusting COLAs to reflect changing currency values. Those changes will continue to be made, and DOD will come up with the money to pay for them one way or another."

Scott Schonauer contributed to this report.

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## Currency experts: Dollar's decline will continue in 2005

BY SCOTT SCHONAUER

Stars and Stripes

NAVAL STATION ROT, Spain — You might want to buy your euros now, currency experts say.

The dollar could be in for a bigger slide in 2005.

Americans living overseas watched the dollar fall lower and lower against the euro last year, boosting the costs for those living off base.

But the trend has to bottom out, right? Not any time soon, analysts say.

Some exchange experts forecast that the euro will reach \$1.45 in the next several months, but a worst-case, "nightmare" scenario has the dollar plummeting to \$2 within a year.

David Gilmore, a partner with Foreign Exchange Analytics in Essex, Conn., sees the dollar dropping to \$1.45 against the euro.

"It's time I will see new lows before the year is out," he said. "It's hard to say when. You know, nothing is ever a straight line."

The weakening dollar can make it difficult financially for Americans living overseas, but the Pentagon has allowances set

up so servicemembers and commands can maintain their purchasing power.

American servicemembers stationed in

Europe would likely see a boost in their cost-of-living allowance, while the different military services stationed in Europe have special service-level accounts that they can grab from to buffer the fluctuating currency rates. For example, if the dollar drops, U.S. Air Forces in Europe can tap into an Air Force budget set up specifically to help minimize the impact, command spokesman Capt. Chris Watts said.

The dollar has rebounded in the last several weeks to \$1.31 on Tuesday, but analysts said that the spike in the value would not last.

"I think it's temporary," Gilmore said. "The Bush administration has made deficit reduction a key objective of the new term, and it's ability to achieve that will probably determine what happens to the dollar."

"I just think there's a very poor record in Congress for cutting discretionary spending for obvious reasons. The war on terror has escalating costs to it. And homeland security has escalating costs to it. And we have record tax cuts in the pipeline the Bush administration is intent on making permanent. So, the budget math doesn't add up."

Clifford Bennett, a chief strategist based in Sydney, Australia, with PwMAX, said the dollar is in a "historical long-term re-pricing."

David Gilmore partner, Foreign Exchange Analytics

"The rally of the U.S. dollar went on for years, and we're just now seeing that unwind," Bennett said. "And things have really changed where the rest of the world wants to invest in the rest of the world instead of just the U.S. this decade."

The good thing is that currency rates are cyclical. What goes down, Gilmore said, will likely come up. The question is, when?

"If you're a member of the U.S. military and you're living in Germany or somewhere else in Europe, right now you understand very much what it does to your purchasing power and you stay on base," Gilmore said. "But it won't stay there forever. The dollar will strengthen over time."

For Americans living overseas, take heed: Even the currency experts get it wrong sometimes.

"Forecasting currencies is more art than science," Gilmore said. "There's no Holy Grail for doing it accurately. Anyone that says they can, his or her nose is growing as they're telling you that."

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# DOD offers benefits to shore Special Ops

BY LISA BURGESS

Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — Hoping to slow the hemorrhage of Special Operations servicemen who are leaving their military jobs to accept lucrative commercial work, Pentagon officials have set aside \$168 million over three years — fiscal 2005 to 2007 — for a commando benefits package.

According to a story in Friday's Christian Science Monitor, senior Pentagon leaders approved the bonus package Dec. 22.

Some of the funds for the bonuses will come from the upcoming 2006 budget proposal, which Congress will have to approve later this year, David Chu, the Pentagon's under secretary of Defense for personnel and readiness, told the Monitor.

Other funds will come from the already-approved fiscal 2005 defense supplemental budget.

Both junior and senior members of the Special Operations will benefit from the bonuses, according to the story, with lump-sum payments totaling as much as \$150,000 going to the most experienced individuals —



ARLO ABRAHAMSON/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

**A U.S. Navy SEAL takes aim during live fire training at Camp Roberts, Calif., in 2003. Pentagon officials have set aside \$168 million over three years to entice Special Ops members to remain in the military.**

operators with 19-years or more as part of the Army's Green Berets and Delta Forces, the Navy's SEALs, the Air Force pararescuemen and combat controllers, and other Special Operations troops.

"We are offering handsome rewards to agree to substantial service beyond 20 years. That's a new objective," Chu told the Monitor. "We're reaching a point ... where we're going to want more Special Operators to stay past 20 years of service

than has been true historically, and particularly to be successful in the war on terror."

The total amount of the benefits will be \$168 million over three fiscal years, beginning last October, and lasting through fiscal 2007, which ends Oct. 1, 2007, according to Army Lt. Col. Joseph Richard, a Pentagon spokesman.

There are about 49,000 members of the Special Operations community. The bonuses are in-

tended only for those specifically designated as "operators," which generally includes those individuals who spend of the most of their time performing tactical operations, mostly in the field, Richard said.

Richard outlined some of the details of the package on Friday, although questions remain about when the benefits will begin and whether they will be retroactive.

Richard said that each service would "issue detailed implementing instructions in the near future."

According to the Dec. 22 memo approved by senior leaders, Richard said, the new incentives will include:

■ A critical skills retention bonus for all servicemen in the rank of E-6 who have completed 19 years of service and who have a Special Operations military occupational skills designator, and who are willing to sign an active-duty service agreement of one to six years.

The amount of the bonus depends on how long the person is willing to stay in the military. Individuals agreeing to stay for a one-year contract (and only members who have completed

24 years of service are eligible for this option) will get \$8,000. For two years, the bonus will be \$18,000; for three years, \$30,000; for four years, \$50,000; five years, \$75,000; and another six-year stint, \$150,000.

■ A \$375 per month special-duty assignment pay for all special operators in ranks E-4 thru E-9. This payment will replace the special duty assignment pay that already exists for commandoes, which "was scattered all over," Richard said. The new benefit structure "makes it equal across the board," he said.

■ A \$750 monthly assignment incentive pay for Special Operations enlisted members and warrant officers with more than 25 years of service, whom Special Operations Command leaders have formally designated as "operators," and who agree to serve a minimum of an additional year.

■ A "critical" designation for Army and Navy warrant officers with a SOF military occupational skills designator, which means their respective services may offer up to \$60,000 in accession bonus in order to attract more warrant officers.

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## SOCEUR quietly celebrates 50 years of service in theater

BY CHARLIE COON

Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — The 15-minute ceremony was low profile, not unlike how the U.S. Special Operations Command Europe prefers to operate.

About 175 people attended a ceremony Friday inside Patch Gym to mark the SOCEUR's 50th birthday. Many were in formation with the color guard, others were seated in the bleachers or in VIP seats up front. Naturally, there was a cake-cutting.

SOCEUR was born in Paris and moved to Stuttgart in 1967. Its job was to plan and control special operations throughout the U.S. European Command's area of responsibility, which now includes more than 90 countries in Europe and Africa.

Members of the joint command include soldiers, sailors, Marines and airmen such as

Tech. Sgt. Laurie Heber, who said that participating in rescue missions in Africa and Eastern Europe makes her job worthwhile.

"That's why I stay [at SOCEUR] so long," said Heber, of Greenville, S.C., who has worked in the command for seven years. "I feel like I'm doing something that helps other people, and that it's relevant."

"I think everyone should cycle through a joint command at some time," said Petty

Officer 2nd Class Adam Klemz of Chicago. "It's a real eye-opener and a good chance to see the big picture."

It's not that SOCEUR was opposed to throwing itself a big party to mark the occasion. It just wasn't feasible at this time, according to the SOCEUR commander, Army Brig. Gen. Thomas R. Csrnk.

"It was the best we could do



CHARLIE COON/Stars and Stripes

**Army Brig. Gen. Thomas R. Csrnk, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command Europe, addresses troops and guests Friday at Patch Barracks in Stuttgart, Germany, during an event marking SOCEUR's 50th birthday.**

under the circumstances," Csrnk said. "We have a lot of folks deployed."

Next year a more robust celebration is being planned, he said, and hopefully it will take place in Paris.

"It's important to take time to honor the history of our organization, to honor the men and women who came before us," Csrnk said. "We do this because of what our forefathers did."

"We raised our hand and

chose to do this. It's not just a patriotic choice."

Since the fall of the Soviet Union and Iron Curtain in the early 1990s, SOCEUR troops have executed special operations in Kuwait, Iraq, Sierra Leone, the Balkans, Liberia, Congo and Mozambique, as well as other places, including the current missions in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Marine Cpl. Adam Dickerson said that being a member of a

joint command has taught him a lot about how the other services work. The 22-year-old from Mason, Mich., said special operations seemed tailored to real-world crises.

"[Special operations] is paramount to how the nation is moving," Dickerson said. "We're using every resource we have at our disposal to tackle the war on terrorism."

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Dickerson



Klemz



# Commanders discuss fleet transformation

Admiral: effort could begin as early as this summer

BY BEN MURRAY  
Stars and Stripes

NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain — Navy forces in Europe could begin shifting with the tide of the fleet's transformation effort as early as this summer, the Commander of Navy Region Europe said this week.

Rear Adm. Stanley Bozin spoke to Stars and Stripes on Friday from Naples, Italy, to recap a three-day conference of high-ranking Navy officials at Rota.

The conference allowed commanders to trade updates on the effort to convert the fleet into a more streamlined, cost-effective force.

The meeting, one of several Bozin said the Navy in Europe likely will hold this year, drew the commanders from all the Navy bases in the region and Adm. Michael Mullen, Commander, Naval Forces Europe.

Bozin said it was "still premature" to talk about specific plans for the possible relocation of forces discussed at the conference, but said elements of the fleet may begin relocating soon.

"I think in the next six months to a year you're going to see some muscle movement," Bozin said.

"We'll continue to look at the best place to place our forces."



Bozin

isn't investing money in bases it is considering closing.

Also at the meeting this week, commanders said the effort to "regionalize" the Navy in Europe by revamping its business practices has been moving forward as planned, Bozin said.

The Navy has been taking stock of everything from custodial services to unpopular Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs in its efforts to cut costs and overhaul its infrastructure in Europe, he said.

The effects of the "cultural change in the way we do business," he said, "should be transparent [to sailors] other than they'll see an increase in the overall level of services available."

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Bozin said he predicted there wouldn't be substantial changes at the Navy's major hubs in the region in the coming year, but did not elaborate on plans for smaller stations.

However, as a clue for bases such as Rota, currently in the midst of a number of construction projects, the admiral said the Navy

# Sailors in Rota facing variety of legal issues

BY BEN MURRAY  
Stars and Stripes

NAVAL STATION ROTA, Spain — A Navy sailor pleaded guilty Wednesday to driving while intoxicated and reckless driving that resulted in an injury to another American servicemember, Rota officials said Thursday.

Airman Ramon Prevencio from Rota's Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron 2 will serve four months of a six-month sentence for the Nov. 6 accident, which occurred in the town adjacent to the Navy facility, base spokeswoman Lt. Alie Freeman said. Prevencio also will receive a bad-conduct discharge, Freeman said.

Also in Rota, two sailors have been charged with a range of assault and weapons charges in connection with the

non-fatal stabbing of a Spanish national in a Rota nightclub last spring. The two sailors, a male and a female whose names were not released by Rota officials, were arraigned on charges ranging from aggravated assault to obstructing justice Thursday, according to Freeman's office. No trial date has been set for either suspect, Freeman said.

And a Rota-based sailor has been charged with the rape of an American woman in an incident that occurred at Naval Support Activity Souda Bay, Crete, in July 2004, according to information from Freeman. The identity of the sailor and the circumstances of the incident were not provided, and Freeman said she could only confirm that a trial date is pending.

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## Navy raising standards, training fewer pilots

PENSACOLA, Fla. — The Navy is cutting back pilot training because more veteran pilots are staying in the service at the same time some aircraft are headed for retirement, including the last of its F-14 Tomcat fighters of "Top Gun" movie fame.

About 160 fewer pilots will be trained this year, a 13 percent reduction from approximately 1,200 student aviators who usually win their wings annually, said Lt. Rob Lyon, a spokesman for the Naval Air Training Command in Corpus Christi, Texas.

The reduction will be obtained by increasing standards, starting with aviation preflight indoctrination, a ground school student aviators attend at Pensacola Naval Air Station.

The Navy is phasing out the Tomcat and S-3 Viking anti-submarine aircraft. Also, it recently decommissioned two squadrons of EA-6B Prowler electronic warfare planes.

The Tomcats are being replaced by F/A-18E and F/A-18F Super Hornet fighters.

From The Associated Press

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Darnstadt	4-10 Mar
Daxheim	18-24 Feb
Friedberg	18-24 Mar
Giebelstadt	4-10 Mar
Graenwoehl	11-17 Feb
Hannau	4-10 Feb
Heidelberg	11-17 Feb
Hohenfels	18-24 Feb
Hilshelm	4-10 Mar
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Kitzingen	25 Feb-03 Mar
Kosovo	18-24 Mar
Lakenheath	11-17 Feb
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Mannheim	4-10 Feb
Milidstadt	4-10 Feb
Ramstein Herules	18-24 Feb
Ramstein Nightingale	11-17 Feb
Rhein Main	25 Feb-03 Mar
Schweinfurt	18-24 Feb
Spangdahlem	4-10 Mar
Tuzla	1-7 Apr
Wailingen	18-24 Feb
Vincennes	18-24 Mar
Vilseck	4-10 Feb
Wegscheid	4-10 Feb
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AAFFES

Showtimes are subject to change. Please check your local theater or [aafe.com](http://aafe.com) to verify show dates.

# Heroics back home earn airman belated accolades

BY RUSS RIZZO

Stars and Stripes

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany — If not for dad, Nicholas Semonelle would likely remain a quiet hero today.

Instead, the Air Force awarded him the highest non-combat medal, the Airman's Medal, last month to add to a collection of accolades that includes the Vanguard Medal and 13 coins.

Semonelle, a 26-year-old senior airman with the 435th Logistics Readiness Squadron, saved two children from a burning house while on leave in his hometown Elba, Ala., two years ago. But he kept his heroics mostly to himself, until his dad — an Air Force major stationed in Alabama — recommended him for the medal.

The accolades have been a pleasant surprise for Semonelle, who had never even heard of the Airman's Medal before his dad recommended him for it, he said. But thoughts still nag about a third child who died in the house fire, he said.

In January 2003, Semonelle and his brother-in-law, John Courson, noticed smoke coming from a house across the street from his sister's home in Elba. Outside, a 14-year-old boy was crying and shaking with fear.

"Three kids are still inside," Semonelle recalls the boy telling them. "I can't get them out."

The boy directed Semonelle and Courson to the back of the house, where a 3-year-old girl was crying inside. Courson threw a brick through a back window and boosted Semonelle through it.

Covering his face with a wet shirt, Semonelle made his way through the black smoke to a voice that cried, "I'm over here, I'm over here." He touched an arm and carried the girl to safety.

The 14-year-old boy outside then told the men that another boy was in a room near the front of the house. Courson went in the front door first, but the smoke overwhelmed him before he could reach the boy. Semonelle made his way toward the 7-year-old boy, who was yelling, "Help me," and grabbed him by the arm.

The flames coming from a back room grew larger, and the boy froze. Semonelle dragged him out to safety.

The 14-year-old boy outside then told Semonelle and Courson that a baby remained inside in a crib. They each made one attempt to find the baby before the flames spread throughout the house.

They never heard crying.

"I think of what could I have done for it to have been different," Semonelle said. "How could I have done a better job? I keep saying, 'Well, there's nothing else that I could have done because the fire got too bad.'"

By the time firefighters arrived, the house was bursting with flames. The 18-month-old baby was found dead in her crib.

Semonelle said he did not purposely keep the incident quiet from his superiors at work.

"I didn't think it was anything important to tell them," he said.

E-mail Russ Rizzo at: rizzo@mail.stripses.osd.mil



Semonelle

## Learning under a microscope



Sgt. David Powell and son Andrew, 6, explore a microscope at Darmstadt Elementary School's Life Under the Microscope night on Thursday. The event was held in the evening so parents could join their children for a night of exploring science.

JAYNE LOPPOW  
Courtesy of U.S. Army

## Phone system launched

LANDSTUHL, Germany — Landstuhl Regional Medical Center's new automated telephone system launched community-wide last week with a few snags but has helped fix the major gripes people had with the old system, hospital officials said.

The medical center began using one main number — 486-LRMHC — last week to connect patients to all of its services by using a computerized operator. Before, patients had to dial directly to an operator when they needed to make an appointment. Those numbers now ring to the automated system.

The medical center worked Fri-

day to double the number of phone lines on the system — from 24 to about 50 — to reduce the number of people getting busy signals when they dial in, said Maj. Timothy Hoiden, chief of clinical operations.

Once people get connected with no busy signal, the system is working well, Hoiden said.

On average, people wait about 20 seconds on hold to talk to a person, well below the Department of Defense's health care standard of 2 minutes, Hoiden said.

People were left waiting on hold too long on the old system and often had a hard time finding the right phone number to call, Hoiden said.

From staff reports

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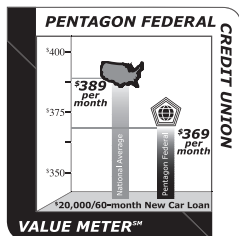
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U.S. soldiers remove a poster threatening Iraqis who vote in upcoming elections from the outside of a mosque in Mosul last week. U.S. forces have intensified operations in Iraq's third largest city in a race to make it safe enough for voters to cast ballots.

## No comment on al-Zarqawi arrest rumors, official says

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Iraq's interior minister on Saturday refused to comment on rumors that the top terror leader in the country had been taken into custody.

"I wouldn't like to comment for the time being," Interior Minister Falah al-Naqib said when asked about rumors that Abu Musab al-Zarqawi had been arrested. "Let's see. Maybe in the next few days we will make a comment about it."

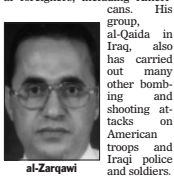
Pressing him, a reporter asked, "Does that mean he is in custody?"

"No comment," the minister repeated.

The rumors about al-Zarqawi followed an interview aired on an Arab television station earlier this month in which a Saudi man arrested for a deadly truck bombing claimed that he heard from other insurgents that al-Zarqawi had been arrested by Iraqi police in Fallujah but released because authorities didn't recognize him.

Rumors spread that Iraqi authorities had al-Zarqawi in custody but were waiting to announce it just before the Jan. 30 elections.

Al-Zarqawi, the leader of Iraq's al-Qaida affiliate, has claimed responsibility for numerous kidnappings and the beheadings of several foreigners, including Americans.



al-Zarqawi

His group, al-Qaida in Iraq, also has carried out many other bombings and shooting attacks on American troops and Iraqi police soldiers.

In an audio diatribe posted Thursday on the Web, a speaker who identified himself as al-Zarqawi called on his followers to prepare for a long struggle against the Americans and denounced Iraqi Shiites for fighting alongside U.S. troops in last November's assault on the rebel stronghold of Fallujah.

The United States has offered a \$25 million reward for al-Zarqawi's capture or death — the same amount as for Osama bin Laden.

# Iraq pledges voter protection

BY MARIAM FAM  
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — The Iraqi government pledged Saturday it would do everything in its power to protect voters from insurgent attacks during this month's national elections, as militants announced they'd killed 15 captive Iraqi National Guardsmen for cooperating with the Americans.

Eight other Iraqi guardsmen and one Iraqi civilian were injured Saturday when a suicide bomber detonated an explosive belt near the gate of a military camp near Hillah, Iraqi office said.

Guerrillas in the northern city of Mosul blasted a building to be used as a polling station with machine gun and rocket propelled grenade fire Saturday, injuring one civilian, a hospital official said.

In Baghdad, the interior minister announced further security measures for the Jan. 30 balloting, in which Iraqis will choose a new 275-member National Assembly and 18 provincial councils.

The minister, Falah al-Naqib, confirmed that Baghdad's international airport would be closed for three days starting on the eve of the balloting. The nighttime curfew in Baghdad and other cities will be extended and restrictions imposed on private vehicles to guard against car bombs, he added.

Al-Naqib told reporters all leaves and passes for police and military forces had been canceled for the election period and that further measures would be announced closer to voting day.

"We have mobilized all our forces as a government," al-Naqib said.

## U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Friday, at least 1,371 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,077 deaths as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is three higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. Friday.

The British military has reported 76 deaths; Italy, 20; Poland, 16; Ukraine, 16; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador,

Hungary, Latvia and Kazakhstan one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,233 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 968 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ One soldier was killed Friday during a raid near Ad Dulaiyah, Iraq.

■ One soldier was killed Friday northwest of Kuwait City in a training accident.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ No identifications reported.

Still, the minister did not play down the gravity of the security threat, nor the difficulties facing this country in organizing and conducting a nationwide election in the midst of a virulent insurgency.

"There are dangers and there are threats to throw the elections process into chaos, but we hope that our security plan will be up to the standards. We don't rule out an escalation from the terrorist forces," he said.

Sunni Muslim rebels have vowed to disrupt the balloting, and Sunni clerics have urged postponement until the security situation has improved. But leaders of the majority Shiites, estimated at 60 percent of Iraq's 26 million people,

have demanded an election, believing their numbers will bring them power long denied them by Sunni Arabs.

Underlining the grave security challenge, the insurgent Ansar al-Sunnah Army announced on a Web site that it had killed 15 Iraqi National Guardsmen seized off a commercial bus this month in the Anbar provincial town of Hit.

U.S. and Iraqi officials believe most of the country is secure enough for elections except Baghdad and three mostly Sunni Arab provinces — Anbar, Nineveh and Salahaddin. Although Iraqis living there will have the chance to vote, insurgent attacks and intimidation may produce a disappointing turnout.

## GI dies in Kuwait crash

KUWAIT CITY — One U.S. military helicopter pilot was killed and another was injured in a training accident in Kuwait, the American military said Saturday.

The accident involving the AH-64 Apache pilots occurred Friday afternoon northwest of Kuwait City, the military said in a statement.

The statement did not provide details about how the accident happened, saying only that it was under investigation. The injured soldier was evacuated to a U.S. military hospital and was in stable condition, it said.

The identities of the soldiers were withheld pending notification of their families.

From The Associated Press

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JOE GIORDONO/Stars and Stripes

U.S. and Iraqi forces detain a man Thursday during a joint patrol of neighborhoods on the outskirts of Ramadi, Iraq. After a search of his house, the man was taken to a detention facility on a U.S. base.

# Joint patrols get the cold shoulder on Muslim holiday

## U.S., Iraqi pre-election sweep finds sparse crowds, mortar fire

BY JOSEPH GIORDONO

Stars and Stripes

**RAMADI, Iraq** — A second day of joint American-Iraqi patrols near Ramadi, on one of the holiest days of the year for Muslims, was met with a decidedly cooler reception than the previous outing.

Once again, members of Company A, 1st Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment combined with Iraqi security forces to patrol in preparation for the Jan. 30 elections. But this time, in a neighborhood thought to be an insurgent safe haven, the local Iraqis were less overtly friendly than the day before in a different district.

A few small children approached the soldiers — which included members of an Iraqi National Guard called India Company — but most of the teenagers and adults watched silently.

"This is 'muj' central," one U.S. soldier remarked, referring to mujahedeen, or Islamic fundamentalist fighters, as the group walked through the central square of a largely dilapidated apartment complex. Some of the little children played with old Kalashnikov assault rifles. One quickly loaded and unloaded the toy's ammo magazine. Soldiers said they wondered who taught the child the action.

The streets were much less crowded than the day before. An Iraqi interpreter with the group explained it was because Thursday was Eid, the Islamic holy day marking the height of haji, the annual pilgrimage to Mecca.

Insurgents did not take the day off, however. Just before the patrol left its base camp on the outskirts of Ramadi, a salvo of at least four mortar rounds whistled overhead and hit the base. Shortly after, U.S. artillery responded with fire, and a loud alarm was sounded throughout the base.

Soldiers just finishing chow downed their helmets and body armor. Units made a count to assure all their personnel were accounted for. There were no reports of injuries immediately after the attack.

Later, as the patrol approached a mosque they said has been preaching anti-American messages, the doors were quickly shut and locked and the men inside started to walk away. Iraqi soldiers called them back and

questioned them. Anti-American leaflets and a banner were found.

One India Company soldier tore up the leaflets in front of the mosque leader. Other Iraqi soldiers took off their boots and searched the mosque. It was an action U.S. soldiers could not have taken alone, and one example of how U.S. officials hope joint patrols will allow forces to be more effective.

"Right now, we're doing a lot of the basic training, familiarizing them with our weapons systems and tactics," said Sgt. Heriberto Vargas, one of the U.S. soldiers training India Company. Vargas is one of the 3,500 2nd Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division soldiers who deployed from South Korea to Iraq last fall.

U.S. officials have staked the future security of Iraq on being able to train an effective and independent Iraqi security force. In the short term, that force will also be asked to bolster election security with the 150,000 U.S. troops in Iraq.

While India Company members searched the mosque, U.S. forces detained a young man who had been seen following patrols for several days. The man had repeatedly acted suspiciously, soldiers said, and they believed he was gathering intelligence for future attacks.

The man was detained, his hands secured behind his back with plastic restraints. Soldiers wrapped engineer's tape around his eyes as a crude blindfold, and told him to lead them to his house so it could be searched.

When soldiers arrived, someone had already alerted the family. The young man's father pleaded with the soldiers to let his son go.

A search team carted off two bags of cassette tapes, documents and other items, and told the family the man was going to be held at a U.S. base for more questioning.

Just before taking the man away, Company A commander Capt. Kevin Capozzoli reassured the family that he would not be mistreated.

"As a father myself, I understand," Capozzoli told the detainee's father. "But there are a lot of problems in this city. And we are trying to fix them."

E-mail Joseph Giordono at: giordonoj@pstripes.osd.mil



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# 1st ID moms' virtual shoulder to lean on

## 'Family of One' e-mail group offers support, camaraderie

BY STEVE LIEWER  
Stars and Stripes

For months now, a 1st Infantry Division soldier could count on two things after stepping off a rest-and-recuperation flight from Iraq at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport: a Texas-sized hug from Donna Cranston and a Shiner Boch beer from the trunk of her car.

Cranston, 47, is the mother of Spc. Matt Cranston, a 1st ID soldier serving in Samarra. She lives near the airport and has taken it upon herself to greet every re-

turning soldier who wears a Big Red One patch. If they need to catch a connecting flight, she personally drives them to the right terminal. If they've got a long layover, she takes them home and feeds them a hearty meal.

"Nothing has thrilled me more than to have a soldier riding in my convertible," Cranston said, communicating via e-mail, as did all the 1st ID family members interviewed for this article.

They will tip their head back, look into the sky, take a deep breath and say "Ma'am you have no idea what a wonderful feeling this is right now!"

Cranston is only the most visible sign of a virtual support group of 1st ID families called the "Family of One" that sprang up online shortly after the division deployed to Iraq last February.

She found like-minded support almost by accident last spring, when Barbara Holman, the mother of a Big Red One soldier, posted messages on Internet bulletin boards belonging to a 1st ID family society and her son's battalion.

"Nothing in my experience ever prepared me for the sudden onset of fear and worry and lack of peace," Holman said. "I was crying and tearing up over nothing, just floating through what had to be done and nothing more."

In the months since, about 70 families from across the country stumbled on the group, drawn to

the Internet by the loneliness and frustration of living while their loved ones were in a dangerous war zone. Suddenly they were in touch with others like them.

"While everyone else was going on with their daily lives, we were having trouble breathing, or wanting to cry or snapping at people," said Kim Willoughby, 47, of Bright, Ind., whose son, Nathan, is in the 1-26 Infantry. "It was a relief to know that across this country, loved ones were experiencing these same feelings — that we were not alone."

Most of the members are mothers, but wives, sisters, girlfriends and even a few dads also have joined. Only a few have met one another in person, and many know each other only by screen names like "Rang-e Mom" and "Pambo."

But almost all of them say they've forged a bond that will last long after their soldiers return home during the next three months.

"We've been through a lot together, becoming a true family and [forming] what I honestly believe will also be lifelong friendships," said Missie Adamczyk, 25, of suburban Washington, whose fiancé, Capt. Michael Jurick, is serving in Iraq with the 1-26 Infantry.

Some of their exchanges are giddy and school-girlish. At the times, the Family of One joins together to boost someone through a rough patch.

Celeste Rubanick, a Florida mail carrier and mother of Spc. Dale Rubanick of the 1st Battalion, 6th Field Artillery, turned to her online friends the day she burst into tears in the middle of her route because she was sure her son had been killed. (He hadn't.)

"We admit to these things and mess on our e-mails," Rubanick said, "and it feels wonderful to find out others feel the same way."

Much of the time they discuss practical matters, like how to put in gift boxes and how to best wrap cookies to keep them fresh all the way to Iraq. When word comes of



Courtesy of Barbara Holman

Barbara Holman, co-founder of the Family of One support group, spends time with Spc. Albert Garcia at Dallas-Fort Worth airport, as he prepares to board his flight back to Iraq after time at home for rest and recuperation. Family of One members in Dallas have made it their duty to greet R&R flights at the airport.

*"We've been through a lot together, becoming a true family and [forming] what I honestly believe will also be lifelong friendships."*

**Missie Adamczyk**  
of suburban Washington,  
shown right with fiancé  
Capt Michael Jurick,  
1-26 Infantry



Courtesy of Missie Adamczyk

an attack in Baiji, Samarra or Baquba, they burn up the Internet looking for information and post whatever news they hear from soldiers downrange.

"I was also warned about the hard stuff," said Lee Ann Grzywa, 47, of Aurora, Ill., whose son, Joshua, is a staff sergeant in the 1-26 Infantry's mortar platoon. "Seeing the look in your soldier's eyes that tells you they've seen things you haven't imagined."

The Family of One has helped its members channel a desperate need to help the troops. Every one of them has shipped boxes of goodies not only to their own sons or boyfriends, but to other soldiers as well. At Christmas, they sent "secret Santa" gifts to each other's deployed children so everyone would get an unexpected

gift. In Dallas, other Texas moms joined Cranston in greeting the R&R flights and working at the airport's USO club.

Joyce Hagens, 48, the mother of 22-year-old twin sons both serving with the 1-26 Infantry in Samarra, created a tribute wall to troops in Iraq at the rural Texas hospital where she works. They take turns writing condolence letters on behalf of the group to the family of every soldier killed in the war.

Rarely two months remain in the Big Red One's tour. So far, none of the group's sons or daughters have been killed and only a few have suffered minor injuries despite some close calls.

"As these last few weeks wind down, we have a heightened

sense of this," Holman said. "There is a fear that something might happen at the end."

Although the end of the deployment is finally approaching, none of the women has any plans to abandon her newfound family. "We have all become so close. It would be like losing a very dear friend," Hagens said.

Many in the Family of One would like to see the Army expand its family readiness groups to include more than just the spouses and children of soldiers.

"Often the military forgets that parents are family," Holman said. "We had to create our own support. I hope others will take our group as a beacon of light."

E-mail Steve Liewer at: Liewer5@gmail.com, stripes.osd.mil

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## IN THE WORLD

# Military begins to leave tsunami-stricken region

## U.S. ends mission in Thailand; Sri Lanka pullout begins

BY JULIANA GITTLER

### Stars and Stripes

UTAPAO, Thailand — U.S. forces officially ended their relief mission to Thailand on Saturday, moving the few remaining operations to the control of the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group at the U.S. Embassy, said Marine Lt. Col. Robert Krieg, a member of the combined support force planning team.

Command and control forces will remain at the headquarters in Utapao for the remainder of the dwindling mission, he added.

U.S. forces also began the process to close down in Sri Lanka, a progression that should wrap up this week, Krieg said.

The overall mission to South Asia is being turned over to the United Nations, which will continue to operate with local governments, participating militaries and aid agencies.

"We're turning [operations] over to them much faster than we thought they'd be ready for," Krieg said.

Also Saturday, Maj. Gen. David A. Deptula, commander of the joint forces air component from Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii,

## Norwegian envoy scrambles to resolve foreign aid dispute

*The Associated Press*

**KILINOCHCHI, Sri Lanka** — With Tamil Tiger rebels claiming the Sri Lankan government is blocking tsunami aid to rebel-controlled areas, Norwegian diplomats are urging the two sides to create a joint body that would ensure fair distribution of humanitarian supplies, officials said Saturday.

Indonesia, fighting its reputation for widespread corruption, repeated promises made earlier this week that it will do all it can to make sure foreign aid reaches tsunami victims. One step an-

nounced by Welfare Minister Alwi Shihab was that foreign governments could designate specific projects they wanted to fund.

In Sri Lanka, envoys from Norway met with Tamil rebels a day after talks with government officials to try to resolve a dispute over aid deliveries in this country that suffered about 31,000 deaths in the disaster.

The rebels accuse the government of obstructing the flow of aid to their territory in the northern and eastern parts of the island. The government denies the allegation.

began a tour of the region to see the reconstruction and visit Air Force troops working there.

"We are seeing a rapid transition now in terms of the nations that originally requested aid and basically getting to the point where they can handle on their own the reconstruction efforts," Deptula said.

At a stop at Utapao, the general said he was pleased with the success of the mission, including the rapid deployment of C-130s to the region and the airlift of supplies by other resources, including Air Force HH-60 Pave Hawk helicop-

Many operations took place on



**BENJAMIN D. GLASS**/Courtesy of the U.S. Navy

Lt. Cmdr. Robert Federal from the USS Abraham Lincoln stacks boxes of food Friday to be delivered to outlying towns around Banda Aceh on the island of Sumatra, Indonesia. As military leaders begin to pull U.S. assets out of Indonesia, the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Group will likely be one of the first to leave.

foreign landing strips in areas where U.S. troops haven't trained before, he said.

In Sri Lanka, U.S. forces moved 146,000 pounds of food, 124,000 pounds of supplies and 8,500 gallons of water, Krieg said.

Pave Hawks helped to evacuate 442 people and Marine and Navy engineers cleared debris in several communities, using some of the debris to repair a sea wall.

At a women's college in Galle, Seabees and engineers demolished two damaged buildings and moved 250 cubic yards of rubble

to clear space for future construction. The groups also cleared debris at several schools and a Sri Lankan army base, Krieg said.

In Indonesia, the last area for U.S. relief efforts, military personnel continued airlifting supplies into remote areas, Krieg said.

U.S. forces continue to evaluate roads and bridges and will provide their assessments to the Indonesian government and the United Nations. If asked, the United States could provide assistance with the projects, Krieg said.

E-mail Juliana Gittler at:  
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# Iran denies OKing women in office

Report: Hard-liners retract statement allowing females to run for president

## Execution may hurt gov.'s dual citizenship

BY ALI AKBAR DAREINI

The Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — State-run media reported Saturday that Iran's hard-line leadership decided to allow women to run for president in June elections, but a spokesman later denied the change.

There was no immediate explanation for the denial. It was not known if the earlier announcement was a mistake or whether the hard-line Guardian Council had reversed its decision.

Throughout the day, state-run radio and television carried reports quoting council spokesman Gholamhossein Elham as saying

the council had changed its policy and allowed women to run.

But in the evening, the media reported Elham denied the new stance.

An official from the TV station's political department defended the state-run media outlets, saying they had reported Elham's comments correctly and that it was the Guardian Council spokesman who had back-flipped.

"It was Elham who changed his story. In both cases we were correct and did our job correctly," the unidentified official said.

Elham could not be reached immediately for comment.

The Guardian Council is a body dominated

by hard-liners in Iran's Islamic regime who have resisted reformers' drive for years to loosen social and political restrictions in the country — including women's rights.

Iranians are expected to vote for a new president in June 17 elections seen as crucial as they will end the presidency of reformist Mohammad Khatami, who is barred from running for a third consecutive term — giving hard-liners an opportunity to retake the post.

The earlier announcement that women would be allowed to run had raised speculation that conservatives were trying to court reformers, ensure a wide turnout in the election to show its legitimacy or to fend off U.S. and European criticism over a lack of democracy in Iran.

The Associated Press

VIENNA, Austria — California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger should be stripped of citizenship in his native Austria for approving the execution of a convicted killer, a leading Austrian politician said Saturday.

Peter Pilz, a top official with the environmentalist Green Party, said the Austria-born Schwarzenegger no longer is worthy of citizenship in his homeland because he broke the law by clearing the execution on Wednesday.

Capital punishment is illegal here, and Schwarzenegger — who holds dual U.S.-Austrian nationality — should be stripped of his Austrian passport for "heavily damaging the reputation of the republic," Pilz said.

He said he sent the Interior Ministry a letter formally requesting the start of the process of terminating Schwarzenegger's citizenship.



Schwarzenegger

# Last day of hajj stoning ritual goes smoothly

BY ADNAN MALIK

The Associated Press

MINA, Saudi Arabia — Tens of thousands of Muslim pilgrims crowded the pathway to three large stone pillars Saturday, some stepping on toes or gently shoving to reach their goal, where they cried out "Allahu Akbar" as they threw pebbles.

The final day of the symbolic "stoning the devil" ritual was slightly more frenzied than the

past two days, as the pilgrims — many carrying their luggage — were in a rush to return to Mecca for the final rite of the annual hajj pilgrimage.

But there were no major problems and doctors reported only few dozen minor injuries, such as scratches and bruises.

"Everything is under control," said Interior Ministry spokesman Mansour al-Turki.

The pilgrims have only until sun-

down to perform the ritual on Saturday, instead of midnight as on other days.

Many ignored loudspeaker warnings — in Arabic, English, Farsi and Urdu — to walk slowly and not push each other. "Give everyone a chance so you get your turn," said the voice on the loudspeakers, repeating a message also displayed on large electronic message boards at the entrance to the Jamarat, or pillars that repre-

sent the devil.

As the crowd thinned in the late afternoon, a thunderstorm slowed the passage of pilgrims. Umbrellas were opened, and many found plastic bags in their luggage to hold over their heads. The mountain ranges that surround the valley could barely be seen through the heavy rain, and thunder and lightning rattled the pilgrims.

Al-Turki said about 160,000 people per hour were passing over the footbridge leading to the pillars.

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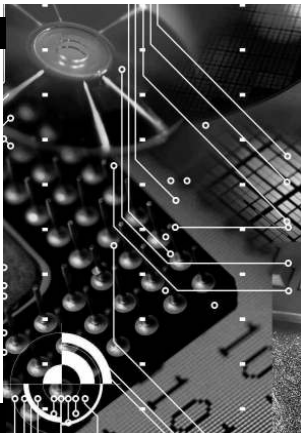
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## IN THE STATES

# Winter storm coats Midwest and Northeast

The Associated Press

MILWAUKEE — A blustery snowstorm swept across the Midwest with windblown snow on Saturday, canceling hundreds of airline flights and slowing highway travel, and it threatened to bury parts of the Northeast under more than a foot of flakes.

Storm warnings were posted from Wisconsin to New England, where the National Weather Service posted a blizzard warning in effect through Sunday. By midday, snow was falling from parts of Wisconsin and Illinois into Virginia and parts of the New England states.

One man died after falling through ice on a pond in Ohio, where two others died of apparent heart attacks while removing snow, authorities said.

Up to 18 inches of snow was forecast in northern New Jersey and accumulations of up to 20 inches were possible in parts of New England, the weather service said. A foot was likely in northern Ohio and some areas of the Midwest, such as southwestern Ohio, already had several

inches on the ground from earlier storms.

Up to a foot of snow had fallen in Wisconsin and Michigan, and wind gusted to more than 60 mph across Iowa.

Highway departments readied fleets of plows and salt-spreading trucks, and some people rushed to stock up on supplies to ride out the storm at home.

"I got a couple steaks, a couple jugs of wine and a couple good books," Walter Trogdash said as he left a convenience store in Toms River, N.J. "I think I'm all set."

But for travelers, the storm caused frustrating delays.

About 400 flights were canceled Saturday at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport and dozens more were called off at the city's Midway Airport. More than 200 people stayed the night at the two airports because of flights canceled when the storm arrived there on Friday.

Flights that weren't canceled were delayed up to 90 minutes, with more delays and cancellations expected as the storm started creating problems at airports



AP photos

**Above:** Harold Coleman spreads salt to help melt snow on the sidewalk he just shoveled outside the sandwich shop where he works Saturday in Chicago. Heavy snow pounded the Chicago area Friday night and continued into Saturday. **Below:** A woman crosses the street through a blinding snow storm Saturday in downtown Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Northeast Ohio was expecting up to a foot of snow.

on the East Coast, said Chicago Department of Aviation spokeswoman Annette Martinez.

The storm spread a welcome layer of snow on snowmobile and crosscountry ski trails in the upper Midwest, but it also caused problems for outdoor enthusiasts.

"It's great for morale and gets a lot of people interested in skiing, but a snowfall like that over the weekend hurts our cash registers because people aren't getting in their cars and coming out here," general manager said John Shema, general manager of the Hidden Valley Resort in Vernon, N.J.



## FBI: Threat may have been hoax

The Associated Press

BOSTON — Gov. Mitt Romney said he has become "less concerned, not more concerned" about a potential terrorist threat against the city of Boston. The FBI, meanwhile, is exploring possible theories for the reports — including a possible revenge motive.

FBI agents have been looking into an uncorroborated tip that 16 people might be planning an attack on the city. Those allegedly involved in the plot include 13 Chinese nationals, two Iraqis and a man identified on the FBI's Web site as Jose Ernesto Beltran Quinones, whose nationality was not given.

But the tipster who told federal officials about the alleged conspiracy may have fabricated the story out of revenge, a federal law enforcement official said Friday. The law enforcement official, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said the tipster may have been angry because a group of illegal immigrants had failed to pay for smuggling them into the country.

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# Roe v. Wade debate lively after 32 years

By DAVID CRARY  
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Coming just two days after George W. Bush's inauguration, Saturday's anniversary of the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion is dominated by the hopes of one side — and fears of the other — that the president will try to overturn Roe v. Wade through appointments to fill expected high court vacancies.

Anti-abortion activists were among the legions of Bush supporters converging on Washington in the past few days, and most will remain for Monday's annual March for Life. Though Bush is widely admired within the movement, some of its militants still question his commitment to reversing the 32-year-old decision.

"President Bush has an ethical obligation to protect the unborn, and he has a political debt of honor to those who put him in office," said Randall Terry, founder of Operation Rescue. "His staff must thoroughly investigate any possible appointee, and if they are not unalterably committed to overturning Roe v. Wade, they must be dismissed from consideration." Anti-abortion lawmakers in Congress and several states, meanwhile, are introducing the latest in a wave of measures aimed at making it more daunting to obtain an abortion. The bills would require abortion providers to tell women 20 weeks or more pregnant that an abortion could cause pain to their fetus, and to offer anesthesia administered directly to the fetus.

Abortion-rights supporters, simultaneously apprehensive and determined, are engaging in pos-



From left, Sharon Turner of Germantown, Md., a member of the Abolition of Abortion Federation, and Alveda King of Atlanta, a niece of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., take part in an anti-abortion demonstration Friday outside the Supreme Court in Washington.

tion reassessments, some of them wondering openly if their rhetoric and strategies should be modified to better compete for public support.

Frances Kissling, president of Catholics for a Free Choice, is suggesting there is little to be gained — in the court of public opinion — by opposing the notion that a fetus represents some form of human life. She proposes "a new pro-choice discourse" that would acknowledge both women's rights and respect for fetal life.

"Abortion is a serious matter; it is a woman's right and no woman needs to apologize for making this decision," Kissling wrote recently. "On the other hand, no woman needs to brag about her choice, and the decision of one

pro-choice organization to sell T-shirts announcing 'I had an abortion' was in poor taste."

She says the legislation provides abortion-rights supporters with a chance to show they do value fetal life. She objects to the federal bill, saying it requires doctors to follow a script that is insensitive to women, but she supports the concept of offering fetal anesthesia in appropriate circumstances.

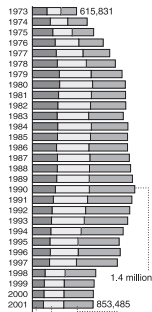
"Abortion should be a humane and compassionate procedure," she wrote in the latest edition of her organization's journal.

Dave Andrusko of the National Right to Life Committee accused Kissling of "Alice in Wonderland" reasoning. You can't concede that a fetus is human, and then say it's allowable to destroy it, he argues.

## Abortions down since peak in 1990

When Roe v. Wade legalized abortion in 1973, nearly one-third of procedures were obtained by women 19 years old or under. In 2001, nearly half of abortions were obtained by women over 25.

Legal abortions in the United States, in millions



Age of 19 and 20-24 25 and women younger years older Alaska, California and New Hampshire did not report in 1998-2001. Oklahoma did not report in 1998 or 1999.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## Roe changes mind, asks court to do so

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The woman once known as "Jane Roe" has asked the Supreme Court to overturn its landmark Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion 32 years ago.

Norma McCorvey, whose protest of Texas' abortion ban led to the 1973 ruling, contends in a petition received at the court Tuesday that the case should be held again in light of evidence that the procedure may harm women.

"Now we know so much more, and I plead with the court to listen for witnesses and re-evaluate Roe v. Wade," said McCorvey, who says she now regrets her role in the case.

The politically charged issue comes before the court as both sides gird for a possible bitter nomination fight over Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist's replacement should the ailing justice retire this term. At least three justices, including Rehnquist, he said, Roe v. Wade was wrongly decided and should be overturned.

Two lower courts last year threw out McCorvey's request to have the ruling reconsidered.

But in a strongly worded concurrence, 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals judge Edith H. Jones criticized the abortion ruling and said new medical evidence may well show undue harm to a mother and her fetus.

## Joe rocks around clock to set new world record

The Associated Press

WINTER PARK, Fla. — Dave Plotkin rocked around the clock — several times over.

The disc jockey at Rollins College's WPRK-FM unofficially set a record Friday for the world's longest continuous broadcast by a single DJ.

Plotkin, 25, took to the airwaves at 9 a.m. Monday and signed off at 11:03 p.m. Friday, a 110-hour span. A DJ in Switzerland lasted 105 hours in July 2002.

"Everything I did, every facet of my life for the past five days, I was broadcasting on the radio with a wireless [microphone] or here in the studio," Plotkin said Friday evening in the seconds before reaching Hour 106 and breaking the old record. "I miss the outside world."

The event, planned for more than a year, raised \$1,150 for the 52-year-old radio station.

It will take Guinness, keeper of the world's records, four to six weeks to validate Plotkin's feat.

Under Guinness's rules, Plotkin had to speak at least once every 30 seconds. And there was no napping while "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" played: Songs could not be longer than six minutes.



Dave Plotkin, left, a disc jockey at Rollins College's WPRK-FM in Winter Park, Fla., tries to keep his eyes open Friday during the 101st hour of his radio marathon.

The event raised funds for the station. The broadcast, which drew tens of thousands of hits, drew donations from as far as Peru.

In between spinning CDs from indie rockers, Plotkin hosted local bands, interviewed city leaders, gave interviews himself and took cold showers in a stall built down the hall from the studio.

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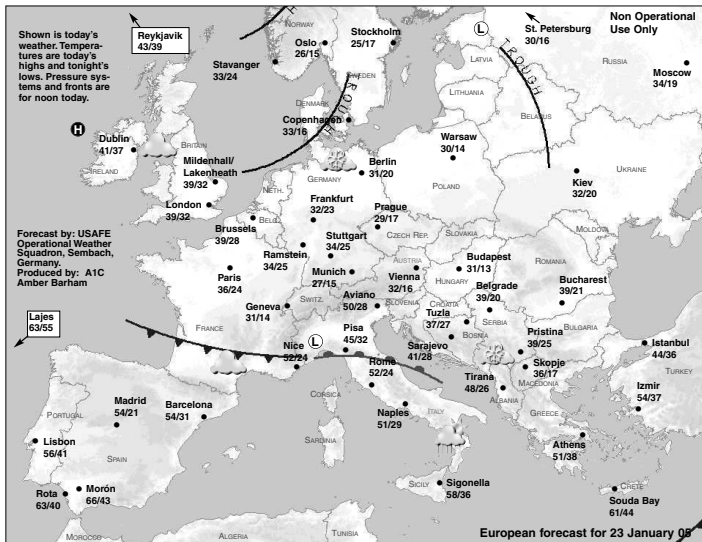
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# EUROPEAN FORECAST

**Benelex:** Mostly cloudy with rain showers in the afternoon. Highs in the upper 30s. Monday lows in the upper 20s.

**Britain, Ireland:** Partly cloudy. Highs in the upper 30s to lower 40s. Monday lows in the 30s.

**Croatia and Bosnia:** Mostly cloudy. Isolated snow showers Monday morning. Highs in the upper 30s to lower 40s. Monday lows in the upper 20s.

**France:** Partly cloudy. Highs in the mid to upper 30s to the north and highs in the lower 40s to lower 50s in the south. Monday lows in the mid 20s.

**Northern Germany:** Mostly cloudy with isolated rain and snow showers. Highs in the lower 30s. Monday lows in the lower 20s.

**Southern Germany:** Mostly cloudy with snow showers. Highs in the upper 20s to mid 30s. Monday lows in the mid teens to mid 20s.

**Hungary:** Partly cloudy. Highs in the lower 30s. Monday lows in the lower to mid teens.

**Northern Italy:** Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. Highs in the mid 40s to lower 50s. Monday lows in the mid 20s to mid 30s.

**Southern Italy:** Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. Highs in the 50s. Monday lows in the mid 20s to mid 30s.

**Kosovo:** Mostly cloudy. Snow Monday morning. Highs in the upper 30s. Monday lows in the lower to mid teens.

**Norway:** Partly to mostly cloudy with isolated snow showers. Highs in the mid 20s to lower 30s. Monday lows in the mid teens to mid 20s.

**Portugal, Spain:** Partly cloudy with isolated rain showers. Highs in the mid 50s to mid 60s. Monday lows in the coastal areas in the lower 30s to lower 40s. Inland lows in the 20s.

**Turkey:** Mostly cloudy with isolated rain showers. Coastal highs in the mid 40s to mid 50s, inland highs in the mid 50s to lower 60s. Monday lows in the mid 30s to lower 40s, inland lows in the 20s.

For current weather watches, warnings, and 5-day forecasts go to USAF's Operational Weather Squadron home page at: <http://www.semback.af.mil>  
<http://www.public.semback.af.mil>

# SUN & MOON

	Today	Tomorrow
Sunrise (Baghdad)	7:04AM	7:04AM
Sunrise (Frankfurt)	8:11AM	8:10AM
Sunset (Baghdad)	5:10PM	5:07PM
Sunset (Frankfurt)	5:05PM	5:07PM

Full moon 25 Jan 05 Last 25 Jan 05 New moon 1 Feb 05 First 01 Feb 05

KEY: Sunny Partly cloudy Mostly cloudy Cloudy Showers Tornadoes Rain Rain/snow Snow Cold front Warm front Trough Occluded Saturated Low High

# AFRICA

Capetown	77	81	Mogadishu	88	75
Dakar	86	84	Nairobi	88	78
Freeport	88	74	Rabat	63	43
Kinshasa	87	71	Tripoli	63	43

# THE WORLD

Amsterdam	57	35	Manila	85	73
Bahran	66	49	Mexico City	73	40
Beijing	50	21	Montreal	66	38
Bombay	82	61	Norfolk	61	40
Buenos Aires	61	54	Rio de Jan	87	76
Buenos Aires	61	54	Rio de Jan	87	76
Calcutta	87	61	Sofia	44	25
Hankow	71	62	Sydney	63	68
Hong Kong	56	41	Tokyo	63	36

# ASIA

Incirlik	56/41
Tel Aviv	64/48
Cairo	67/48

# MIDDLE EAST

Mazar-e-Sharif	38/31
Kabul	39/21
Islamabad	59/36
New Delhi	68/45
Zahedan	53/32
Kandahar	52/40
Hyderabad	88/65
Bombay	88/67

# TODAY'S STATESIDE OUTLOOK

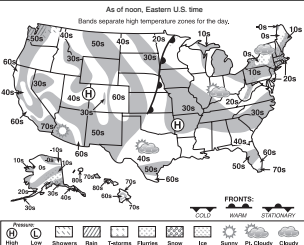
Alaska	50	38	Idaho	50	38
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Alaska	50	38	Idaho	50	38
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Hamburg	21	11	Snow
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Nashville	33	18	Or
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## AAEF's overall prices too high

I am writing in response to the many letters I've read in Stars and Stripes concerning the Army and Air Force Ex-  
 change Service gas-price situation.

It sounds like military in Japan are hav-  
 ing relatively the same problem we are  
 here in Europe. AAEP's claims to set its  
 gas prices based on the average weekly  
 U.S. prices, yet we here are paying \$2.66  
 a gallon while folks back home are pay-  
 ing \$1.78 a gallon.

Every day we see commercials and ad-  
 vertisements by AAEP's stating that it  
 supports the military, it keeps prices low  
 for those of us serving our country away  
 from home and it provides a great ser-  
 vice to us by not charging any tax. Yet it  
 more than makes up for no tax charges  
 with its outrageous prices on everything  
 from a T-shirt to gasoline.

I could go into almost any store back  
 home and buy a T-shirt for under \$10,  
 where the average price for a T-shirt in a  
 post exchange store is close to \$20. A pair  
 of jeans can run you around \$35 to \$40,  
 for an off-brand. In fact, we have even  
 sent money to our parents to purchase  
 our clothes at home because it's cheaper  
 to buy and ship them than it is to pur-  
 chase them from the post exchange.

When is AAEP's going to keep its word  
 and start supporting the military by keep-  
 ing prices low? When is it going to stop  
 capitalizing on our situation by being thou-  
 sands of miles from home — and from  
 good stores?

Our troops are limited by being sta-  
 tioned here and instead of support and  
 help from AAEP's, it is taking advantage  
 of our situation and our wallets.

God bless our parents who are willing to  
 shop for us back home and God bless  
 the Wal-Mart, Target and J.C. Penney  
 stores back home for truly great deals  
 and prices. AAEP's could learn a thing or  
 two from them.

Candy Horton  
 Darmstadt, Germany

## Where were prison supervisors?

It seems to me that something is amiss  
 totally in the Abu Ghraib prisoner-abuse  
 scandal.

I also was embarrassed when I first

## Tell us what you think

Stars and Stripes welcomes your comments on  
 editorials and columns that are published in the  
 newspaper. Submit letters on topics of impor-  
 tance in the lives of our readers. All letters must  
 be signed, and must include the writer's address  
 or base and telephone number. Please limit all  
 letters to 300 words. We reserve the right to edit  
 letters for length, taste and clarity.

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 Via fax: (Country code +49) (0) 6155/601395;  
 DSN 349-8395  
 E-mail: letters@starsandstripes.com

saw the photos and heard of the breaking  
 abuse scandal. I fully agree that these ac-  
 tions are immoral, indecent, intolerable  
 and against the Geneva Conventions.

I sometimes tend to agree with some  
 writers when they say, "So what?" Do  
 these fanatic terrorists have any remorse  
 about the crimes they commit against  
 their own countrymen, our soldiers, and  
 innocent civilians and children?

However, these actions [at Abu Gh-  
 raib] are illegal and deserve punishment.  
 What I cannot come to terms with, and ac-  
 cept, is that a junior enlisted reservist, an  
 E-4, could manage to put together and be  
 rising master to such a "band of rogue  
 guards" without being noticed.

These actions didn't just happen in a  
 blink of the eye, and in an isolated cor-  
 ner, or back room. These actions took  
 time, and occurred over a period of time.

My question is, where were the senior  
 enlisted, and officers, when this abuse  
 was taking place? Were these super-  
 visors never in the work area where these  
 actions took place? The military/civilian  
 interrogators surely outrank this "ring  
 master," and had to be present in the en-  
 vironment. How could these profession-  
 als not notice what was happening  
 around them?

Anyone would agree that if the senior  
 chain of command didn't see what was  
 happening under its eyes, then it was neg-

ligent or absent in its duties also. You can  
 delegate authority, but you can't delegate  
 responsibility.

Will there be any senior-level person-  
 nel in positions of responsibility  
 courts-martialed and serving sentences,  
 or was the explanations of "I wasn't  
 aware of these actions under my com-  
 mand" accepted?

Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth A. Cox (Ret.)  
 Stuttgart, Germany

## TV spots a 'necessary evil'

Over the past few weeks, I have also  
 been following the U.S. Air Forces in Eu-  
 rope commercial editorial saga and I  
 have my own 2 cents I'd like to add.

Letters to the editor being what they  
 are, purely the opinion of the writer  
 whether shared by others or not, they are  
 just that, opinion. It is important to note  
 that relevant arguments have now been  
 raised on both sides.

I agree that the frequency at which  
 these commercials are aired is quite dis-  
 turbing.

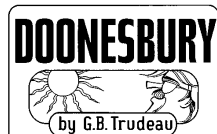
Additionally, I would hardly consider  
 phrases such as "Bring your courage"  
 and "I just got fished flying off 777" critical  
 information. I've even heard it said that  
 Gen. Robert H. "Doc" Foglesong has  
 earned himself another nickname,  
 D-Diddy, because he has more videos  
 than P-Diddy.

However, I also agree with a letter writ-  
 ter ("Foglesong TV spots defended," Jan.  
 19) on one issue: It is very important for  
 senior leadership to be recognized by  
 those they are responsible for. It would  
 be next to impossible to meet or address  
 each person under your command in per-  
 son; therefore, these commercials are  
 valuable in that they put the USAFE  
 command can readily identify his or her  
 commander.

While I do prefer to see "State Quiz,"  
 history or "This is how potato chips are  
 made" commercials, our USAFE leader-  
 ship commercials are somewhat of a nec-  
 essary evil. Perhaps all the recent atten-  
 tion they have received will serve to en-  
 hance their quality.

At any rate, both sides have been  
 heard and openly discussed; do we really  
 need to carry it on much further?

Staff Sgt. Wayne Bukaty  
 Sembach Annex, Germany



## OPINION

## What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

China can't hide Zhao's legacy  
Los Angeles Times

China well understands the danger of reformers' funerals. In 1989, the death in April of disgraced former Communist Party chief Hu Yaobang propelled tens of thousands of supporters, angered at the government's treatment of Hu, into Beijing's Tiananmen Square. They protested party corruption and government nepotism. As weeks went by and the crowd grew, the demands came to include greater democracy. The protests ended with the declaration of martial law and the indelible image of tanks routing demonstrators as one young man in the square tried to stop them.

Zhao Ziyang, a former premier who in 1989 was the leader of the Communist Party, supported the protesters. Weeks before tanks and troops crushed the rebellion, Zhao went to Tiananmen to meet the demonstrators, weepingly telling them, "We've come too late, we've come too late." It was his last public appearance.

Monday, after nearly 16 years under house arrest, Zhao died. The government, afraid of stirring protests, censored foreign broadcasts of his death, ordered that the news be buried deep inside newspapers if printed at all and insisted again Tuesday that its actions in 1989 were correct. Police feared preventively into Tiananmen Square.

... Zhao failed to persuade party leaders to match political reforms to economic advances, there has been progress in opening local party committees to discussion and debate. If the Chinese can mobilize the discontent grass-roots movements into a force that demands a say in government, Zhao will receive the honor he deserves.

Allies will recall Iraq timeline  
Journal Star, Peoria, Ill.

Nearly two years into the war to rid Iraq of its alleged "weapons of mass destruction," the Bush administration officially called off the search for them this month. "Based on what we know today, the president would have taken the same action (to invade) because this is about protecting the American people," said White House Press Secretary Scott McClellan.

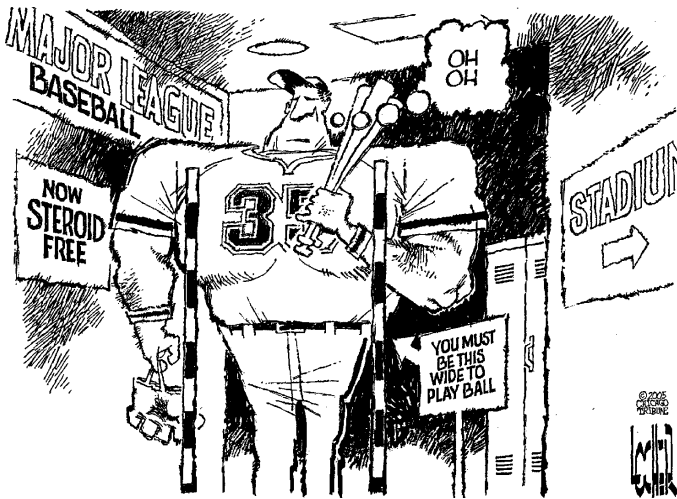
"Protect them from what?" would be a fair question, given that no such WMDs were found and that the president made those WMDs the primary justification for his decision to go to war.

To be fair, Bush's predecessor also believed Iraq had WMDs, and Saddam Hussein did a pretty good job of pretending. But beyond that, the American people have already issued their judgment. In November it didn't seem to matter much, at least to most voters, that there had been no satisfactory explanation for how a president could put so much American lives in jeopardy.

Global opinion does matter, maybe not today or tomorrow, but someday when we're staring down another potential menace — and we have no reason to believe in Saddam — and we ask for the world's help. What kind of "moral authority" will America have then? It's another fair question.

Scapegoat or not, Graner times  
The Watertown (N.Y.) Daily Times

Spc. Charles Graner, the alleged ringleader of the Abu Ghraib guards, has been convicted on all 10 counts under five charges: assault, conspiracy, maltreatment of detainees, committing indecent acts and dereliction of duty. He has sentenced to 10 years in military prison by a jury of four Army officers and six senior enlisted men.



Mr. Graner, 36, an Army reservist from Pennsylvania, will be dishonorably discharged after completing his sentence. He has been demoted and ordered to forfeit all pay and benefits.

The reservist ... maintained he was just following orders. He said intelligence agents at the prison ordered the abuse of prisoners to make them easier to interrogate.

So far, authorities have not uncovered a wider network of abuse or found evidence to validate Graner's explanation that he is being blamed a scapegoat. Four soldiers have pleaded guilty in the case. Two other guards are awaiting trial.

Bringing the offenders to justice shows the world that the United States does not tolerate such misconduct. It is the right thing to do and the right message to send.

'Crossfire' done, thank you  
Chicago Tribune

In announcing the end of CNN's 22-year-old high-decibel political slugfest "Crossfire," CNN/US President Jonathan Klein said something quite unusual for a network television executive: He had listened to a critic.

To be fair, a Washington Post writer that he agreed with comedian Jon Stewart, who famously used a "Crossfire" appearance last fall to rip into the show for "partisan hackery."

"I think he made a good point about the noise level of these types of shows, which does nothing to illuminate the issues of the day," Klein said.

Could this step away from TV's shout-show abyss portend a healthy swing to politeness? One can only hope.

In an ABC News survey, 85 percent of respondents said that the world would be better if we said "please" and "thank you" more. Now, that would seem to be stating the obvious. ... But there's no doubt we could stand to be more civil to one another. May the demise of "Crossfire" mark the rise of something good.

Don't ignore Medicaid, Medicare  
The Miami Herald

President Bush lost no time in pushing Social Security reform to the top of his domestic agenda for the second term. Unfortunately, his priorities are off the mark. America's

healthcare system and the government's Medicaid and Medicare programs demand far more attention, and more urgently.

Medicaid programs, which serve 53 million poor and disabled people, are being squeezed financially due to rising healthcare costs and increased rolls as more Americans fall into poverty. The Medicare trust fund, which covers major healthcare costs for 42 million seniors, is projected to become insolvent in 14 years.

Meanwhile, projections for Social Security's insolvency begin more than 20 years later, beyond 2040.

President Bush's campaign paints a picture of a Social Security system about to melt down. Yet the real crisis today involves the 45 million uninsured Americans, nearly 16 percent of the population, including some eight million children. ... Our priority should be to have every American covered by health insurance and control costs with preventive care.

Even this 'sacrifice fly' helps  
The Indianapolis Star

Under threat of government intervention, not to mention scorn from fans, Major League Baseball and its players' union finally stepped up to the plate and swung at a policy dealing with steroid abuse.

It wasn't exactly a homer. A sacrifice fly would be a better description. But considering the sham of a policy now governing the sport, even a bunt would have been welcome.

The new policy mirrors one used in the minor leagues, where players are tested four times a year, with a 15-game suspension for the first positive test, a one-year ban on the fourth violation, and a lifetime ban from the minors for a subsequent positive result.

Baseball's new rules leave a lot to be desired. But perhaps younger athletes will get the message that steroids and other drugs aren't the sole path to athletic advancement.

Public is meat of the matter  
Yakima (Wash.) Herald-Republic

Canadian authorities confirmed ... that another animal in the western province of Alberta had tested positive, the second found to have mad cow disease since U.S. officials announced last month they would resume the cattle trade with Canada in March.

Canadian officials also said that once again no part of the cow has entered either the human or animal food system. That's an important consideration.

Still, the announcement could add support to U.S. cattlemen who have used to block the lifting of the ban on Canadian beef, saying allowing the trade will hurt U.S. producers and put consumers at risk.

On the other hand, beef packers, who have had to pay more for cattle since the Canadian border closed, support reopening trade.

We're confident government officials and scientists are on top of this on both sides of the border. But our main focus should be on inspections and other methods to ensure public health and safety in the food supply and not be sidetracked by protectionist policies that tilt the dynamics of the marketplace.

Having a ball by buying access  
The Times Herald-Record, Middletown, N.Y.

President Bush spent much of [last] week getting ready for Thursday. You could hardly blame him for quite so fast.

With the inauguration for his second term momentarily taking some attention away from the war in Iraq, the president made several public appearances.

He told one interviewer that, since he's not running for president again, "maybe politics won't creep in quite so fast."

But then he also noted he had a "big agenda in mind." ... That agenda is the reason so many large corporations have chipped in \$250,000 apiece and so many private donors gave \$100,000 apiece — sometimes more, thanks to loose rules on these donations — to pay for the inauguration events. If that's not political, what is? Wealthy individuals and corporations are financing the parties, parades and balls as a way of saying thank you and, by the way, don't forget us when you get back to work on this domestic agenda.

## Correction

Last Sunday's "What newspapers are saying at home" page misidentified the location of The Spokesman-Review. It publishes in Spokane, Wash.



## AFRTS Television Schedule

Updated sports listings are available on the first Scoreboard page in the sports section or AFN's Web site at <http://myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil>

SUNDAY, JANUARY 23, 2005							
(AFN-FAMILY)	(AFN-MOVIE)	(AFN-EUROPE)	(AFN-KOREA)	(AFN-NEWS)	(AFN-SPORTS)	(SPECTRUM)	(AFN-PACIFIC)
9:00 House of Mouse	9:48 Movie *** "Mr. Nice Guy" (1987, Comedy) Mike McDonald, Joe Silver.	Movie *** "Nancy Drew" (2002, Mystery) Megawyn Layton, Brett Culen, Lauren Brink.	Andromeda A map leads to the Abyss.	Headline News America's Black Forum	College Basketball Teams to Be Announced. (Taped)	Latin Lifestyle Urban Style	Andromeda A map leads to the Abyss.
10:00 Ed, Edd n Eddy	10:00 Ed, Edd n Eddy	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
11:00 Pimlico (E)	Movie *** "Con Air" (1997, Suspense) Nicolas Cage, John Cusack. Violent criminals hijack a prison transport.	Movie *** "Con Air" (1997, Suspense) Nicolas Cage, John Cusack. Violent criminals hijack a prison transport.	Movie *** "Con Air" (1997, Suspense) Nicolas Cage, John Cusack. Violent criminals hijack a prison transport.	Big Story Weekend Edition With Rita Cosby	SportsCenter	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
11:00 Planet's Funniest Animals	11:00 Planet's Funniest Animals	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
12:00 NBA Inside Stuff	12:00 NBA Inside Stuff	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
12:30 Happy Days	12:30 Movie *** "Twins" (1992, Comedy) Robert Downey Jr., Cameron Diaz. A genetically enhanced twin seeks his estranged twin.	Movie *** "Twins" (1992, Comedy) Robert Downey Jr., Cameron Diaz. A genetically enhanced twin seeks his estranged twin.	Movie *** "Twins" (1992, Comedy) Robert Downey Jr., Cameron Diaz. A genetically enhanced twin seeks his estranged twin.	Big Story Weekend Edition With Rita Cosby	SportsCenter	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
12:30 Movie *** "Beethoven's 2nd" (1993, Comedy) Charles Grodin, Bonnie Hunt.	12:30 Movie *** "Beethoven's 2nd" (1993, Comedy) Charles Grodin, Bonnie Hunt.	Movie *** "Beethoven's 2nd" (1993, Comedy) Charles Grodin, Bonnie Hunt.	Movie *** "Beethoven's 2nd" (1993, Comedy) Charles Grodin, Bonnie Hunt.	Big Story Weekend Edition With Rita Cosby	SportsCenter	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
14:00 Movie "Sabrina, Down Under" (1999, Adventure) Melissa Joan Hart, Tara Charendoff.	14:00 Movie "Sabrina, Down Under" (1999, Adventure) Melissa Joan Hart, Tara Charendoff.	Movie "Sabrina, Down Under" (1999, Adventure) Melissa Joan Hart, Tara Charendoff.	Movie "Sabrina, Down Under" (1999, Adventure) Melissa Joan Hart, Tara Charendoff.	Big Story Weekend Edition With Rita Cosby	SportsCenter	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
15:00 Doug (E)	15:00 Doug (E)	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
16:30 The Wild Thornberrys	16:30 The Wild Thornberrys	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
17:00 The Fairly OddParents	17:00 The Fairly OddParents	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
17:30 Rugrats	17:30 Rugrats	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
18:30 Kratt Bros. Be the Creature Makers from Real Bats.	18:30 Kratt Bros. Be the Creature Makers from Real Bats.	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
19:00 America's Funniest Home Videos	19:00 America's Funniest Home Videos	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
20:30 Gilmore Girls' Last Week Fights, This Week Thighs.	20:30 Gilmore Girls' Last Week Fights, This Week Thighs.	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
21:00 American Dreams 'Stealth's Charge'	21:00 American Dreams 'Stealth's Charge'	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
22:00 The Cosby Show	22:00 The Cosby Show	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
22:30 Home Improvement	22:30 Home Improvement	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
23:00 Touchy by an Angel 'Foot Loove'	23:00 Touchy by an Angel 'Foot Loove'	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
23:30	23:30	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News The Chris Matthews Show	Navy/Marine Corps Sports	Fantasy Camp Ramp on the Road	Headline News ESPNs	Headline News ESPNs
MONDAY, JANUARY 24, 2005							
00:00 SpongeBob SquarePants	00:00 Movie "Night of the Creeps" (1986, Horror) Eric Roberts, Jeffrey Jones. A man is terrorized by his neighbor's creepy dog.	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
0:30 Rugrats	0:30 Movie "Night of the Creeps" (1986, Horror) Eric Roberts, Jeffrey Jones. A man is terrorized by his neighbor's creepy dog.	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
1:00 Kratt Bros. Be the Creature Makers from Real Bats.	1:00 Kratt Bros. Be the Creature Makers from Real Bats.	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
2:00 America's Funniest Home Videos	2:00 America's Funniest Home Videos	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
3:00 Gilmore Girls' Last Week Fights, This Week Thighs.	3:00 Gilmore Girls' Last Week Fights, This Week Thighs.	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
4:00 American Dreams 'Stealth's Charge'	4:00 American Dreams 'Stealth's Charge'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
4:30 Sesame Street (E)	4:30 Sesame Street (E)	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
5:00 Barney & Friends (E)	5:00 Barney & Friends (E)	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
6:00 Blue's Clues 'Geography'	6:00 Blue's Clues 'Geography'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
7:00 Dragon Tales (E)	7:00 Dragon Tales (E)	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
8:00 The Wiggles 'Work'	8:00 The Wiggles 'Work'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
9:00 The Explorer	9:00 The Explorer	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
9:30 Stanley	9:30 Stanley	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
10:00 Savvy-Savvy Cat	10:00 Savvy-Savvy Cat	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
10:30 Reading Rainbow (E)	10:30 Reading Rainbow (E)	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
11:00 Savvy-Savvy Cat	11:00 Savvy-Savvy Cat	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
12:00 Stanley	12:00 Stanley	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
12:30 The Explorer (E)	12:30 The Explorer (E)	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
13:00 The Wiggles 'Travel'	13:00 The Wiggles 'Travel'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
13:30 Bob the Builder	13:30 Bob the Builder	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
14:00 Dragon Tales (E)	14:00 Dragon Tales (E)	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
14:30 Bob's Cues 'Shape School'	14:30 Bob's Cues 'Shape School'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
15:00 Funniest Home Videos	15:00 Funniest Home Videos	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
16:00 Full House 'Radio Days'	16:00 Full House 'Radio Days'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
16:30 Rockin' Wiggles	16:30 Rockin' Wiggles	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
17:00 Doug 'Doug's Big Race' (E)	17:00 Doug 'Doug's Big Race' (E)	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
17:30 The Wild Thornberrys	17:30 The Wild Thornberrys	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
18:00 The Fairly OddParents	18:00 The Fairly OddParents	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
18:30 Rugrats	18:30 Rugrats	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
19:00 Yams 'Abu's Kung Fu Bats'	19:00 Yams 'Abu's Kung Fu Bats'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
20:00 Smallville 'Tempest'	20:00 Smallville 'Tempest'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
21:00 Boy Meets World	21:00 Boy Meets World	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
22:00 The Cosby Show	22:00 The Cosby Show	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
22:30 Home Improvement	22:30 Home Improvement	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
23:00 Touchy by an Angel 'Foot Loove'	23:00 Touchy by an Angel 'Foot Loove'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary
23:30	23:30	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	NFL Football 100th Anniversary	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	PGA Golf: Black Invitational	Austin City Limits 'Dine & Dash'	NFL Football 100th Anniversary

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KRT photos

These ladies are strong contenders for the Oscar for Best Actress: From left, Hilary Swank, Imelda Staunton, Annette Bening, Catalina Sandino Moreno and Kate Winslet.

**Q** In your view, who'll be nominated this Tuesday for the Oscar for Best Actress? — Kim Clark, South Bend, Ind.  
**A** We put Hilary Swank at the top of our list for her gutsy performance as a boxer in "Million Dollar Baby." Our other front-runners: Annette Bening as an aging actress in "Being Julia," Imelda Staunton as a '50s London abortionist in "Vera Drake," Kate Winslet as Jim Carrey's free-spirited girlfriend in "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" and Catalina Sandino Moreno as a drug "mule" in "Maria Full of Grace."

**Q** What led to David Bowie's emergency heart surgery last July? And how is he doing now? — Jerry Mucha, Shenandoah, Pa.

**A** While on tour in Germany, the rock star sought medical attention for what he thought was a pinched nerve. In fact, it was a blocked artery requiring angioplasty. Bowie, 58, canceled his tour but hopes to work again this year. Meanwhile, he tells us, "reading is high on my list, so it's the comfy chair for me."



David Bowie will be doing more reading than rocking out for awhile.

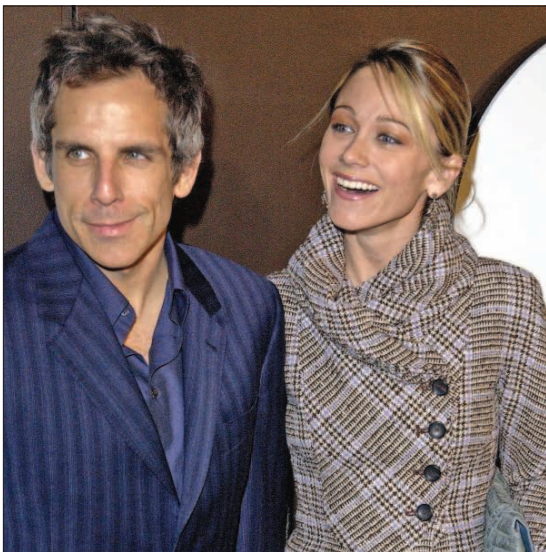
**Q** Is it true that Ted Koppel is retiring when his current "Nightline" contract expires next December? — R.K., Washington

**A** At 64, Koppel tells us he has no plans to retire. But it's rumored that the ABC brass would like to retire "Nightline" — the show Koppel began 25 years ago — and replace it with a higher-rated, late-night variety show to compete with NBC's Jay Leno and CBS' David Letterman.

**Q** A Chinese dinner is riding on this: I say Paul Newman originated the role of Brick in Tennessee Williams' "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" on Broadway. My friend says it was Ben Gazzara. Who's right? — T. Butler, Houston  
**A** You pour the duck sauce. Gazzara, 74, starred on Broadway in 1955 but lost the role to Newman for the 1958 film. "It broke my heart," Gazzara writes in his new memoir, "In the Moment: My Life as an Actor." "What would happen to me now?" He needs to have worried: Gazzara has since appeared in 67 feature films.

**Q** Sharon Warren was great in "Ray" as the singer's washerwoman mom. Where did this talented newcomer come from? — Russ Baker, Denver

**A** From Alabama by way of Atlanta, where she was just starting a stage career when she crashed the "Ray" audition and won the role. "I was given 12 emotionally driven scenes with no time to prepare," says Warren, 27. "Fortunately, I'm comfortable with just diving into the reality of the moment." That reality now includes a role in "Glorious Road," an upcoming sports flick. Could her life get any better? Says Warren: "I'd like a partner to share it with."



Ben Stiller seems to have it all — acting/directing/writing career, wealth and a pretty wife, Christine Taylor.

**Q** I don't get Ben Stiller. What's the secret of his success? — Frank Fleischer, Miami

**A** Stiller, 39, is one of Hollywood's shrewdest players. He chooses projects that appeal to his young core audience. He's also a multiple threat as an actor ("Meet the Fockers"), a writer and director ("Zoolander") and a producer ("DodgeBall" and "Starsky & Hutch") whose company just signed a three-year deal with DreamWorks to deliver at least one film a year. Of course, it didn't hurt that he inherited his parents' comic genes. The rewards? Ben is married to gorgeous actress Christine Taylor, 33, and is very rich.

**Q** I'm bothered by actresses like Emily Procter on "CSI: Miami" who work a crime scene with long hair that would contaminate the evidence. Why do producers allow it? — Dallas Lemus, Orlando, Fla.

**A** Because, on TV, catching murderers comes second to using females with long tresses, tight sweaters and low necklines to catch male viewers ages 18-49.

**Q** ABC's "Lost" recently featured a haunting song as the group split up. What was it? — Dolores Oliver, Waterbury, Conn.

**A** Willie Nelson's "Are You Sure?" Its lyrics — about being where you want to be — were a perfect fit for the survivors as they decided whether to stay on the beach or move inland. Incidentally, the popular series isn't only making tons of money for ABC; it's also making stars of Evangelina Lilly and Matthew Fox.

**Q** Whatever happened to Nelson Rockefeller's widow, Happy? — Mary L. Kitchen, Decatur, Ga.

**A** Happy Rockefeller (born Margaretta Fittler) is still going strong at 78. She entertains in her sumptuous Fifth Avenue apartment and makes the social scene around New York. Happy attended Ronald Reagan's funeral last year at the National Cathedral in Washington.

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## Cooking controversy

**OH** THOMPSON — A high school principal promises he's going to give the living skills curriculum an extreme makeover after a student skinned and cooked a guinea pig and a rabbit during class.

The student, a 16-year-old boy, told the principal, Reto Gage, that he killed the animals at home before bringing them to Ledgemont High School. Gage said living skills teacher Diana Stevens lets students prepare a meal of their choice on Wednesdays.

Students who didn't want to watch were allowed to go into another room, Gage said.

The student had asked Stevens if he could catch and cook a wild rabbit and she approved, provided he gut the carcass before class, Gage said. He said the student, whose name was not released, is an active hunter.

The animals, however, apparently were purchased at a pet store.

## Musical research

**NC** GREENSBORO — The University of North Carolina at Greensboro has started a research institute dedicated to increasing the understanding of how music is created by the human brain.

Researchers will look for insights by studying music's uses in medicine, psychology and education, among other fields.

## Parish closing

**NH** ROCHESTER — An Episcopal parish that lost most of its worshippers after the diocese elected an openly gay bishop announced it will close after Easter. Remaining parishioners decided to close the Church of the Redeemer, saying there aren't enough worshippers and the parish leaders are overburdened.

The church has operated for more than 100 years.

## Coach must stop prayer

**MI** AUGUSTA TOWNSHIP — A Washtenaw County school district ordered a high school coach to stop leading his wrestlers in prayer. The district issued the order after the ACLU threatened to sue unless Daren Schaller stopped the prayers, which came after practices and before meets.

The whole team participated in the prayers, which the district said were voluntary.

## Penmanship for doctors

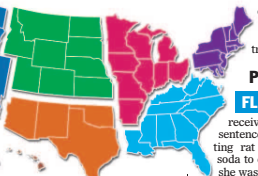
**MT** HELENA — The state House Judiciary Committee endorsed a bill calling for sanctions against doctors if a licensed pharmacist can't read the prescriptions they write. Under the legislation, repeat offenses could lead to a fine of up to \$500.

The bill now goes to the full House for debate.

## Costco sells Picasso

**WA** SEATTLE — Costco shoppers were offered an online deal this month — an original Picasso.

The crayon-on-paper drawing of a face signed and dated by Pablo Picasso was listed for \$39,999.99



## AMERICAN ROUNDUP

on the retailer's Web site Jan. 12. It sold Wednesday, said Jim Sinegal, Costco's chief executive, who would not identify the buyer.

The Issaquah-based discount retailing giant may be better known for bulk chicken and cases of soda, but the Costco.com site features an eclectic mix of items, from caskets to computers to sports equipment.

Art dealer Jim Tutwiler, who sold the Picasso, has been selling art through Costco for the past decade. He said Costco's markup is one-tenth that of traditional galleries.

## Death settlement

**IN** BLOOMINGTON — The family of a man who died after a jailer shocked him with a stun gun has reached a \$500,000 settlement over his death.

James Borden, 47, died in November 2003 at Monroe County Jail, where Lawrence County police had brought him for violation of a home detention order. Jail reports said Borden was "uncooperative," prompting jailer David Shaw to shock him six times with the stun gun.

Lawrence and Monroe counties agreed to the settlement but did not admit liability in Borden's death.

The settlement does not include Taser International Inc., the Scottsdale, Ariz.-based maker of the stun gun.

A coroner ruled Borden's cause of death as a heart attack brought



## Icy perch

A red-tailed hawk sits a top a pignon covered branch in Washoe Valley, Nev.

on by an existing heart condition, drug intoxication and electrical shock.

## Poison plan

**FL** FORT LAUDERDALE — A woman received a 20-year prison sentence Thursday for putting rat poison in her boss' soda to cover up the fact that she was stealing his money.

Femesha Foster, 37, was found guilty Jan. 5 of poisoning for dropping the toxic mix into optometrist Mark Caruso's drink in 2000. Caruso realized the drink tasted funny and drove himself to an emergency room, where he was treated and released.

Foster, who worked as a technician for Caruso at a Wal-Mart, said she had discovered that her boss knew she had written checks from his account. Foster said she was not trying to kill him, but only send him home sick so she could have time to cover her tracks.

Foster's lawyer, William Lamphear, said he would appeal the verdict and sentence. He had argued Foster was innocent because there wasn't enough rat poison in the soda to do Caruso harm.

Foster is almost at the end of a five-year prison sentence for grand theft in the case.

## Polite robber

**MN** MILWAUKEE — Sometimes saying please just doesn't work.

A man trying to rob Marine Land Pets got locked inside the pet store because of some fast action on the part of two clerks. The sisters, Wendy and Crystal York, triggered alarms that notified police and locked the store's front door.

The man can be heard on the store's security tape demanding that the clerk's open the door, only to hear them say, "We can't."

Then he asks again, "Open the door, ma'am. Please open the door."

He finally found his way out a back door and fled. Police were looking for him.

## Scalding reaction

**MA** BOSTON — A Boston parking meter attendant suffered first- and second-degree burns on her face and upper torso after a man angry over the \$55 ticket she gave him allegedly threw hot coffee at her.

Christi Novello, 44, was walking her beat in the Back Bay at about 8:30 on Thursday morning when she saw a Hummer parked in a loading zone with a woman in the passenger seat.

She gave the woman a chance to move the vehicle before writing a \$55 ticket and slipping it under a windshield wiper.

"I am a nice meter maid," Novello told the Boston Herald.

"As a courtesy, I gave the lady a chance to move, but she pointed at the Starbucks and refused."

The driver, Francois Youhanna, came out of the coffee shop enraged, Novello said.

"He had a vent-sized cup of black coffee in his hand and he flung it right in my face."

Youhanna was arrested and charged with assault and battery with a deadly weapon, hot coffee.



## Sweet little lambs

Jaden Silva, 2, leads his animal in the pee wee division of the lamb light weight medium wool class at the Cameron County Fair Grounds in San Benito, Texas.



## It's as easy as pie

Spencer Hill, left and Bridget Deery, both students at Notre Dame High School in Burlington, Iowa, take part in a pie-eating contest in the school's cafeteria.



## Sunset baseball

Adam Wootton, 4, plays baseball with his aunt and grandmother as the sun goes down at Civitan Park in Farmington, N.M.





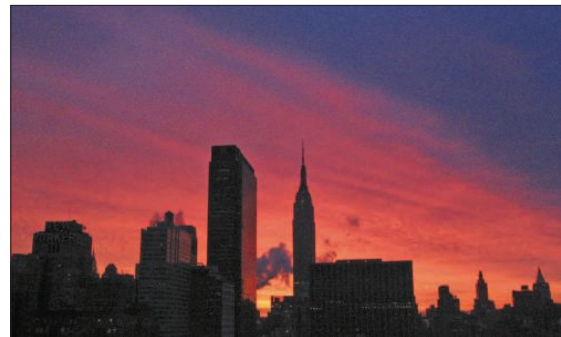
**Making a point** Chad Sommers, left, of New Orleans, and Donald Bratton of Ocean Springs, Miss., both students at The University of Southern Mississippi, put on a fencing demonstration on the Hattiesburg, Miss., campus.



**Catching air** Brandon Knox, 17, of Omaha, Neb., jumps a hill at Mt. Crescent Ski Area in Crescent, Iowa.



**Too hot to handle** Montana State University-Northern student Dan Stratton welds together a spark tester during welding certification class at MSU-Northern, Havre, Mont.



**Before the storm** Dawn breaks over the midtown Manhattan skyline, with the Empire State Building center right, on Saturday.

## Quarry crash

**ME** ROCKLAND — A vehicle skidded off a cliff and plunged into an ice-covered quarry, but divers will wait until spring to recover the body of the driver.

A passing driver saw the accident, which happened Thursday morning near the Limerock Street-Old County Road intersection. The witness told police she saw a dark-colored Chevy Blazer go over a stone barrier at the side of the road and fall into the city-owned quarry.

Rockland police Sgt. Jeff McLaughlin said snowy weather, road conditions and speed probably contributed to the accident.

## Cockfight extortion

**SC** COLUMBIA — A former state official pleaded guilty to extortion charges Thursday and admitted taking a \$10,000 bribe to protect a cockfighting organization from legal trouble.

Suspended South Carolina Agriculture Commissioner Charles Sharpe was accused of accepting the payoff from an organization involved in breeding and raising birds for cockfighting, which is illegal in the state.

He used the money to pay off a debt from his 2002 campaign for commissioner, prosecutor Mark Moore said. Sharpe also pleaded guilty to lying to a federal officer.

"I am truly sorry for my error in judgment and ask for forgiveness," Sharpe told the court.

## Alarming problem

**CA** FREMONT — Burdened by thousands of false alarms, police in Fremont will become the first in California to stop responding to burglar alarms unless there is a confirmed break-in or security breach.

The new policy, effective Feb. 18, will allow police to handle more urgent calls and save the city about \$600,000 a year in staff time and equipment costs, Fremont Police Chief Craig Steckler said.

"I'm going to get out of the alarm business," Steckler said. "I was never asked permission to get into it."

Under the policy, police won't respond to burglar alarms unless a resident, property owner or alarm company employee can show evidence that a crime occurred, such as glass breakage or seeing a suspicious person. Officers, however, will still respond to panic, duress and robbery alarms.

## Costly surgery error

**NY** NEW YORK — A hospital and the New York Rangers' hockey team doctor Thursday were ordered to pay \$450,000 to a dance director and choreographer who had surgery on the wrong knee.

Douglas Hall, 43, went to St. Vincent's Hospital in November 2001 for arthroscopic surgery on his right knee. Despite marking the right knee with an "X," Dr. Andrew Feldman operated on the left knee.

Feldman, described on St. Vincent's Web site as the head team physician for the Rangers, admitted an error occurred; the parties disagreed on how it happened.

## An otter nuisance

**OH** COLUMBUS — The wily and playful river otter was once on the verge of extinction in Ohio. Now they're thriving — and causing so much damage that wildlife officials are considering allowing hunters to trap them.

It's a situation neither states have had with other animals. In Florida and New Jersey, it's the black bear. The Rockies and Alaska have the gray wolf. Nearly everywhere else, it's the white-tailed deer and Canada goose.

The otter's numbers have soared in just two decades — from 123 to about 4,300 — and Ohio wildlife officials are proposing a permit-only two-month trapping season. The Ohio Wildlife Council will vote on the proposal in April.

## Turtles on the decline

**FL** DAYTONA BEACH — Endangered loggerhead turtles along Florida beaches are in serious and rapid decline, but last year's four hurricanes are probably not to blame, experts said.

According to the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge, a 20-mile stretch on Florida's east coast from Melbourne Beach to Wabasso Beach, the number of loggerhead nests have dropped steadily since 1998, from 18,000 nests to approximately 8,000.

Loggerhead nesting activity is inconsistent from year to year.

There are high and low cycles that last a few years each and are considered normal. But after six years of lows, experts said something might be wrong.

## Puppy sparks fight

**NY** NEW YORK — A Bronx teenager fatally stabbed a 20-year-old man and wounded a teenage girl in a fight over a pit bull puppy, police said.

Samuel Encarnacion, 18, was arrested on murder and assault charges in the incident, which happened at about 2:45 a.m. Thursday inside a Bronx apartment.

Encarnacion allegedly became violent when his girlfriend, Ophelia Torres, 16, and her cousin, Johnny Torres, refused to let him play with or help train the puppy, police said.

## Charitable nudity

**CA** STANFORD — More than a dozen Stanford University freshmen have put together an eye-catching calendar, inspired by southern Asia tsunami victims and naked Maine lobster fishermen.

The calendar, which has already sold 70 copies and no doubt will sell hundreds more, features 14 students from Larkin Hall, a freshman dormitory. All are naked, but strategically so.

"You can't see anything," said Pam Geist, one of three Larkin students who created the calendar, which will raise funds for Save the Children. "Everything is blocked."

Geist is topless in the April photo, but her long hair and a discreet camera angle make sure she is revealing nothing more than a liberal halter top would.

Co-creators Joel Lewenstein and Andrew Burman are the August models, with both holding cameras in strategic places. One camera has a telephoto lens.

Stories and photos from wire reports

## YOUR MONEY



Shoppers are shown at the Atlantic City Outlets-The Walk in Atlantic City, N.J., last week. Atlantic City, known more for its gambling than for its shopping, is a vacation spot for betting senior citizens, says a study that warns about elderly gambling.

## Gambling seniors need to remember fixed incomes

BY GARY ROTSTEIN  
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Significant numbers of older adults admit betting more money than they can afford to lose or wagering sums above \$100, a new study reports in warning about elderly gambling.

Researchers from the University of Pennsylvania and Penn State College of Medicine did not find that older adults necessarily gamble more than the rest of the population. They suggested, however, that a rate similar to younger adults poses more risks because of the higher percentage of seniors on fixed incomes, with mental impairments, or with health-care needs that could be sacrificed to invest in gambling.

The study, published Wednesday in the American Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry, found that of 843 Philadelphia-area residents 65 and older, 70 percent had gambled in the past year on lottery tickets, bingo, Atlantic City casinos or other options.

About 4 percent of those interviewed admitted betting more than they could afford to lose. Nearly 8 percent, including some of the latter group, had risked at least \$100 on a single wager. The researchers grouped those two categories together into an "at-risk" population representing about one of every nine survey participants.

"I didn't think it was going to be this much," said Dr. David Oslin, lead author and an assistant professor and geriatrician at the University of Pennsylvania. "I would have thought it would be lower in older adults because not too many people come to me talking about their gambling."

The study's release comes four months

after the gambling industry gained some favorable publicity in a Yale University report that showed older recreational gamblers to be healthier than their non-gambling peers. One common interpretation of that data was that someone in a bingo hall or casino was more likely to be active and healthy to begin with, rather than receiving any cause-and-effect benefit from gambling. Some researchers allow that social benefits can come from gambling as a group within a population that's sometimes isolated.

The casino industry's American Gaming Association and some organizations that focus on problem gambling said it was hard to react to the new study because they hadn't yet seen it. Some in the field agreed, however, that attention needs to be focused on the elderly because of the increasing prevalence of gambling opportunities.

"It definitely should be studied because [the older population] does have a large number of people with time on their hands ... and it's really good to keep an eye on vulnerable populations," said Christine Reilly, executive director of Harvard Medical School's Institute for Research on Pathological Gambling and Related Disorders.

"This confirms to us it's probably something we need to pay attention to," Oslin said. "Now we're justified in going ahead with that groundwork, seeing if patients are making those trade-offs."

"This confirms to us it's probably something we need to pay attention to," Oslin said. "Now we're justified in going ahead with that groundwork, seeing if patients are making those trade-offs."

## New online tools help job hunters

BY ANDREA COOMBS  
CBS MarketWatch

SAN FRANCISCO — Want to stand out from other job seekers? An online profile may be one way to do that.

These days, you can send a link to your online profile in an e-mail to prospective employers. Ziggs.com, a company that launched in October, offers online profiles for \$25 a year, with the first year free.

"The online profile gives so much [more information than] the résumé. It's a great point of differentiation," said Tim DeLello, chief executive at Ziggs.

The profile you create includes a snapshot page complete with photo and quick introduction, a more detailed biography and a fax interview, where the applicant decides which questions to answer.

Unlike networking sites such as LinkedIn and Ryze, Ziggs profiles also are a means to maintain a semblance of control over one's online "brand."

For \$50 a year (on top of the \$25), the company will ensure your profile tops the list of sponsored searches when any one searches your name using a major Internet search engine such as Google or Yahoo.

"Your name being in search listings is important and the information attached to it is important," DeLello said. Employers are "going to look at that, even before they invite you in for an interview."

"The way Ziggs got started is I found out that, out of 100 random search-engine queries, about 5 out of 10 are proper names," he said.

"They're looking for us and we need to make sure we are presented right."

Some job seekers have no online presence to worry about, but even those who do should consider this: Employers conducting online searches may be more interested in finding information that you're not about to reveal in a profile.

"We've had instances where we were ready to hire and a Google search revealed [this lawyer] had been released from jail a year earlier," said Ira Halperin, co-head of the corporate practice

unit at Meltzer, Lippe, Goldstein & Breitson, a business law firm based in Mineola, N.Y.

"That was not on his résumé," Halperin said, adding that the company conducts Internet searches on every potential employee, from janitor to lawyer.

For Halperin, an online profile makes little sense from a hiring perspective. Since the profile is written by the applicant, "obviously it's going to be filtered." Internet searches "are a free opportunity to do some checking that takes minimal effort," he said. "I have a sense that it is common not only among law firms but anyone who's hiring these days."

Some note that those posting online profiles should avoid adding photos. "Recruiters do not want to see the ethnic background of an individual prior to the interview," said Mark Mehler, co-author of CareerXroads, a directory of job sites. "They could be accused of discrimination."

Whether or not you decide on an online profile is worth your money, there's no doubt you'll still need a résumé.

"Most hiring managers still want to see a very pristine, clean, good-looking résumé," Mehler said. "It's not going away."

Given that the résumé remains a powerful force in hiring, considering avoiding these all-too-common mistakes:

■ Avoid jargon, and generalities. "Put details on your résumé, the ways you've made a concrete difference," said Andrea Klay, a career consultant and author of "Greener Pastures: How to find a job in another place."

■ Stick to relevant information. "The biggest mistake that I see is people put too much information on there that doesn't resonate" with hiring managers, said Jennifer Johnson, director of recruitment at Wisnisk Career Enterprises, in New York.

■ Don't rely on e-mail alone. "Some company networks are flat-out deleting e-mails that have attachments," said Kevin Donlin, president of Guaranteed Resumes, based in Edina, Minn. This "gives you a perfect excuse to call the employer."

## Is this on sale?



Ray Grover sits in a new Lexus while shopping for cars at Lexus of Serramonte in Colma, Calif., on Jan. 13. At right is salesperson Marco Alexander. Retail sales, helped by zipping activity in auto showrooms, jumped by 1.2 percent in December, providing a solid finish to a year in which sales climbed at the fastest pace since 1999.



## YOUR MONEY

## Mortgage shouldn't lead to debt

**Q: I'm 21 and thinking about buying my first home. How much house can I afford to buy, and is it OK to bid less than what the seller is asking?**

**A:** You have actually asked two of the more difficult questions to answer when it comes to real estate.

Many people believe there are strict formulas that determine how much they can borrow for a home. In reality, lenders have loosened their standards considerably in recent years, and some borrowers may find — and get to their later sorrow — that they can get a much bigger mortgage than they can comfortably repay.

A good rule of thumb is to keep your total housing costs — including mortgage, taxes and insurance — to about 25 percent of your gross income. That way, you'll have enough money for other goals, such as retirement savings and vacations.

You can stretch a bit more if you expect your income to rise considerably within a few years or if you have no other debt. But you might want to be even more conservative if your income is uncertain or your debt load is particularly heavy.

Once you have a target monthly payment, you can play with the online mortgage affordability calculators offered by companies including Bankrate.com and E-Loan Inc. to see how much house that will buy.

As far as how much to bid, you might consider consulting an experienced real estate or buyer's agent who is well-versed in the neigh-

borhoods you're targeting for your house hunt.

There are no hard-and-fast rules. Some sellers overprice their homes; others set the price too low, hoping to set off bidding wars. A smart agent can help you figure out which is which, and coach you on the best bidding strategies for your market.

**Q: I was confused about a statement you made regarding penalties for withdrawing from 529 college savings plans. You mentioned a 10 percent penalty on withdrawals that aren't used for qualified education expenses but didn't say whether the penalty applies to the entire withdrawal or just the earnings.**

**A:** If it's just the earnings, why should I care about the penalty? Even if I don't use the money for education, I'd still be ahead because the money had a chance to grow tax-deferred.

**A:** That would be a heck of a loophole, wouldn't it? But, alas, it doesn't exist.

It's true that only the earnings in your 529 are subject to the penalty, not your original contributions. But you'll also have to pay regular income taxes on any gains that you withdraw.

The combination of taxes and penalties effectively eliminates the 529 as a tax shelter for most folks unless the money is used for education — or unless they're in a much lower tax bracket when they withdraw the money than they were during the years in

which the gains were accrued.

**Dear Liz: I want to disagree with you over your recent advice about buying cars for kids.**

I was extremely depressed during my senior year of high school for many reasons, but a big part of it was that I couldn't drive because of our financial situation. My mom had other bills to pay, and my paychecks weren't big enough to cover the insurance.

I really don't think you grown-ups know how it feels to wait for rides, walk home past the young sophomores that drive and have people look down on you. All I can say is that when I have kids, I will do anything to make sure they have a car.

**A:** No, you probably won't — because someday you'll be the grown-up and you'll realize what a service your mother did for you by not buying you something your family couldn't afford.

You also will learn, with any luck, that how you react to circumstances is a lot more important than the circumstances themselves.

By the way, many of us grown-ups know exactly how it feels to wait for rides, and we survived just fine.

Liz Pulliam Weston is the author of "Your Credit Score: How to Fix, Improve and Protect the 3-Digit Number That Shapes Your Financial Future." Questions for Money Talk can be submitted to her at 2340 Lure Canyon Blvd., No. 238, Studio City, CA 91604, or via her Web site, [lizweston.com](http://lizweston.com). She requests that she cannot respond personally to queries.

## Money Talk



Liz Pulliam Weston

## New Outlook program

REDMOND, Wash. — Microsoft Corp. will begin selling its Outlook e-mail program as a subscription to Hotmail customers, in a bid to persuade people to pay for add-on services and better compete with rivals such as Google Inc. and Yahoo Inc.

The new service, which costs \$59.95 per year, will let people use Hotmail e-mail contact lists and calendars in their online Hotmail accounts using the Microsoft Outlook program most often found on businesses' desktop computers.

Ted Schader, principal analyst with Forrester Research, said Redmond-based Microsoft is smart to take advantage of a popular core product — Outlook — to help nudge Hotmail more attractive to sophisticated users. But he noted that there are many free programs that do similar things, and questioned whether the price will be too high to garner much interest.

"That feels pretty steep to me," he said.

The move comes as Microsoft's competitors also appear to be looking for ways to help people better organize and manage their growing e-mail inboxes.

From The Associated Press

## FRIDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY

## INDEXES

52-week High	Low	Name	Last	Net Chg	% YTD	52-week High	Low	Name	Last	Net Chg	% YTD
10,658.51	9,708.41	Dow Jones Industrials	10,352.09	-12.46	-1.5	-3.52	-1.66				
3,823.98	2,743.46	Dow Jones Transportation	3,471.17	-42.25	-1.20	-8.61	+12.96				
259.86	231.00	Dow Jones Utilities	231.70	-1.11	-0.33	-0.27	+12.17				
7,713.18	6,211.33	NYSE Composite	6,996.56	-13.91	-0.20	-3.59	+5.58				
1,437.40	1,159.74	AMEX	1,414.58	-48.32	-3.40	-15.00					
1,259.41	1,250.82	Nasdaq Composite	1,254.27	-11.61	-0.93	-4.40	+1.52				
1,217.90	1,069.72	S&P 500	1,167.87	-17.54	-1.54	-3.63	+2.31				
666.09	546.29	S&P MidCap	633.14	-13.51	-2.15	-4.46	+5.83				
656.11	515.90	Russell 2000	611.88	-12.6	-2.1	-2.1	+2.51				
12,246.32	10,358.52	10 Wilshire 2000	11,507.29	-60.78	-0.53	-3.87	+3.14				

## NYSE

Most Active (\$1 or more)				Most Active (\$1 or more)				Most Active (\$1 or more)			
Name	Vol	Last	Chg	Name	Vol	Last	Chg	Name	Vol	Last	Chg
Lucant	6647.5	3.27	-0.11	SPDR	610269	116.78	-0.72	Nasdaq100	112927.5	37.45	-0.38
Pfizer	3571.5	24.48	+0.50	SemGroup	2712.2	30.22	-0.41	Microsoft	73432.1	5.83	+0.29
Genent	2799.9	31.3	+0.69	GM	2019.0	15.16	-2.8	United	7017.6	24.18	-2.8
Colson	2217.8	14.06	+0.12	3M	7834.0	7834.0	-1.2	Microsoft	73432.1	5.83	+0.29
NorthH	1529.2	3.16	+0.04	DAK	7619.0	103.84	-0.78	Amgen	1579.2	15.39	-2.9
United	1848.0	+0.16	+0.16	CiaDiamond	6615.1	3.14	+0.34	Cisco	59269.8	18.61	-0.31
Clarus	757.2	14.12	+0.12	SP	6812.0	2.38	-2.4	United	7017.6	24.18	-2.8
NorthH	17683.3	+0.14	+0.14	SP	6812.0	2.38	-2.4	Oracle	47704.4	85.06	+2.72
EMC	161.54	13.09	-0.87	WheatR	3468.8	1.2	+0.14	Oracle	47704.4	13.11	+0.03
Motorola	161.54	13.09	-0.87	WheatR	3468.8	1.2	+0.14	Oracle	47704.4	13.11	+0.03

## NYSE

Key Defense Stocks	NYSE	Key Mutual Funds	NYSE
Alliant Technology 65.0	63.29	Fidelity Invest: Global 37.07	-3.1
Aerotech 8.0	42.97	Fidelity Invest: Global 37.07	-3.1
Boeing 1.00	50.29	Fidelity Invest: Global 37.07	-3.1
Boeing 1.00	50.29	Fidelity Invest: Global 37.07	-3.1
Boeing 1.00	50.29	Fidelity Invest: Global 37.07	-3.1
Boeing 1.00	50.29	Fidelity Invest: Global 37.07	-3.1
Boeing 1.00	50.29	Fidelity Invest: Global 37.07	-3.1
Boeing 1.00	50.29	Fidelity Invest: Global 37.07	-3.1
Boeing 1.00	50.29	Fidelity Invest: Global 37.07	-3.1
Boeing 1.00	50.29	Fidelity Invest: Global 37.07	-3.1

## EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	Value
Dollar buys (Jan. 24)	0.7512
British pound (Jan. 24)	1.6120
Japanese yen (Jan. 24)	100.00
South Korean won (Jan. 24)	1,011.00
Commercial rates	Value
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.377
British pound	1.2211
Canada (Dollar)	0.7512
Denmark (Krone)	0.5949
Euro (Euro)	0.7512
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.981
Hungary (Forint)	160.20
Iceland (Krona)	62.46
Ireland (Euro)	0.7512
Israel (Shekel)	10.267
Japan (Yen)	106.76
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.292
Norway (Krone)	6.3198
Philippines (Peso)	45.54
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.7503
Singapore (Dollar)	1.6332
South Korea (Won)	1,038.00
Switzerland (Franc)	0.648
Thailand (Baht)	36.61
U.S. dollar	1.0000
U.S. dollar	1.0000
U.S. dollar	1.0000
U.S. dollar	1.0000
U.S. dollar	1.0000
U.S. dollar	1.0000
U.S. dollar	1.0000
U.S. dollar	1.0000
U.S. dollar	1.0000
U.S. dollar	1.0000

## Cents and Sensibility

## Money tip of the day

## Inventory your home

## CBS MarketWatch

**NEW YORK** — Many retail stores conduct an inventory after the holidays, and it's also the perfect time for individuals to take stock of their own possessions.

A home inventory lists all your personal possessions, as well as their estimated value. Such a compendium can be vital when it comes to emergencies and being adequately insured, reports the Insurance Information Institute, which disseminates insurance information to the public.

Should your home be damaged in a natural disaster or other emergency, you'll be able to attach a dollar amount to the ruined items. If your home is burglarized, you will have documentation of what went missing.

Having a home inventory also can speed your insurance claim and ensure that you have enough coverage to replace your possessions.

Here are some things you might list:

- Attic/Basement: Storage trunks, luggage, holiday decorations, exercise equipment

- Bathroom: Cosmetics, medicines, scale, towels
- Bedroom: Bed, mattress, jewelry, clocks, paintings, furniture, clothing
- Living room: TV, stereo equipment, CDs, piano
- Home office: Computer, answering machine, files, books
- Laundry room: Clothes washer/dryer, iron, cleaning supplies
- Outside: Patio furniture, grill, decorations
- Garage/Shed: Lawnmower, tools, bicycles
- Dining room/Kitchen: China, silverware, food, kitchen appliances, pots/pans

Remember to list the relatively little things, like toys, DVDs and books. Though they might not be worth much individually, think about what it would cost you to replace them all. You might supplement your list with photos or a videotaped walk-through of your home. Hold onto the receipts for any big purchases. Be sure to keep the inventory and any supplemental materials in a safe place — such as a fireproof metal box or with a professional personal and financial papers.

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# Sunday Horoscope

Mother Moon is in Cancer, her native home. This and other astrological aspects could inspire you to call your own mother or honor her in some way. Any unresolved issues around the idea of mother now get another, hopefully more compassionate, look. It also becomes important that domestic life mirror life outside the home and life internal.

## TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

**(January 23).** The world would love you to succeed this year. The more you can see this, the better loved you feel and the more confident you are as a result. Believing the best about human nature is your key to success. Attention to detail attracts the interest of wealthy business partners! It's wonderful when someone invests in you. Love signs are Pisces and Taurus.

## ARIES (March 21-April 19)

You wake up focused. From the first rays of sun to the whir of the coffee grinder, every sight and sound reminds you of the one with whom you're trying to connect. By sundown, you'll succeed.

## TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

The picture of love you paint in your mind may be unrealistic, but it sure is a beautiful thing to gaze upon. Seldom do you indulge yourself in non-reality for as long as you will today.

**GEMINI (May 21-June 21).** It's all about casting. The right people around you will keep the doldrums from setting in. Create social opportunities so you can revel in the sweet exclamations of lighthearted friends.

**CANCER (June 22-July 22).** Whatever you take on, do it without a doubt because hesitation is the enemy now and second-guessing causes only problems. Let your well-honed instinct carry you toward the smart people who can help you succeed.

**LEO (July 23-Aug. 22).** It's not the last time you'll have one of those long, arduous conversations

with an emotionally ailing friend, but it may be the first time this person follows your advice. Take a photo. You'll want to remember this.

## VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Others would be wise to add to your list, their team, their friends, their party or your, even better, their party to you. Your mental clarity (aristad) helps you prevent a mistake from happening.

## LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

The thing about magic is, there will always be a certain percentage of the public that can't suspend its disbelief because it is too bent on figuring out the "trick." Today, you'll win over even those skeptics.

## SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21)

Be open-minded. If your sign mate Nelly can have a hit song with country artist Tim McGraw, you, too, can find a way to work with the Taurus in your life — and maybe even make some money together.

## SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

No, you're not imagining things. There's real chemistry between you and that quirky someone. Don't even think about what your next move might be. Things unfold in an inevitable fashion.

## CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

When it's not working, simply back off. Once you release the need to prove your point, you'll experience happiness. An emphasis on listening and receiving will allow you to accomplish much with very little effort.

## AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

When you can't afford something, don't rationalize that you didn't need it in the first place. Instead, put your air-sign ingenuity to practical use, and figure out another way to get what you want.

## PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

Ease up on your expectations of a new project. Like cakes on the griddle, the first one usually doesn't turn out so great. Toss it, and try again. You'll soon get to something golden.

Creators Syndicate

# 'Down East' follows downwind

My husband and I have just returned from a vacation to Maine, or "Down East." While we were there we asked several people why the region is called "Down East" and not "Up East," as you would expect.

The term "Down East," an apparently misnomer applied broadly to the northeast coastal United States and parts of Canada — and specifically to the coast of Maine — has been around for quite some time, dating back perhaps as far as the colonial period. Several theories of origin have been forthrightly debated over the years, but none can be proved.

The coast of Maine lies to the northeast of Boston. One theory

ties the origin of "Down East" to the days when the majority of travel between Boston and Maine was done in sailing vessels. Because the winds were most often southwesterly, especially during the time of year when most travel took place, ships sailed downwind when sailing in a northeasterly direction. Travelers heading to Maine were thus said to be traveling "down" or "down east."

A second theory is that "down" was merely a way of implying the travel was taking place in a direction away from the hub.

This column was prepared by the editors of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, with the assistance of send questions to Merriam-Webster's Wordwatch, P.O. Box 261, 47 Federal St., Springfield, Mass. 01102.

# Stylist stepmom gets unkind cut

**Dear Abby:** My father is upset with me and my sister-in-law because we didn't ask his wife, "Clarice" — who is a hairdresser — to cut, color or style our hair.

Clarice primarily services middle-aged and older females, who usually request haircuts and styles far different from what we want as young women. She does a great job as a stylist on that particular kind of client, but we're less confident in her skills with trendier styles and colors — not because she's incapable, but because you become expert at what you do every day.

We have never discussed our feelings with Clarice; for years, we just got our hair done elsewhere. Dad recently let us know that our choice of stylists has hurt his wife's feelings.

We all love Clarice dearly and have a good relationship with her otherwise. Do we have a family obligation to use her services? How should this be addressed?

## — Feeling Trapped in Georgia

**Dear Feeling Trapped:** It was wrong of your father to put you on the spot, but now that he has, you must talk to Clarice. Many women would rather curl up and "dye" than change hairdressers.

Since you have a long-standing relationship with yours, explain that to Clarice.

However, please keep in mind that a good hairdresser is more than a one-trick pony.

**Dear Abby:** I have a big decision to make and I need your help. I am from New York but I have lived in Virginia for 10 years. I moved after I got divorced and took my two boys with me.

I went home to New York for the holidays and now would like to move back because my parents and grandmother are getting old. I am 44; my boys are 19 and 21. The problem is, they don't want to go.

I have no life because all I do is take care of my boys. I make good money but I have nothing to show for it because of them. They use me. Both of them live with me and neither one helps with the bills. They both earn as much money as I do, but I am always sacrificing myself to give them money.

I can't take it anymore. I feel I don't leave them, they'll never grow up. It pains me that I'll be so far away from them, but my brother has offered to sell his house, and I really want to go. Please help.

## — Vacillating in Virginia

Letters for this column — with name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box #940, Los Angeles, CA 90009. Readers who write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.earthlink.net/dearabby> will receive a Universal Press Syndicate

## Dear Abby



**Dear Vacillating:** Your "children" aren't children anymore. They are both self-supporting young men. The greatest gift a parent can give a child is independence.

The longer you remain a crutch, the longer your sons will lean. If you want to be nearer to your family, for heaven's sake, go! You have the chance of a lifetime, and you should take it.

**Dear Abby:** Thank you for coming to my aid in debating the act of giving my best friend a pair of diamond earrings on her retirement last year.

I find it reprehensible that you assume we had slept together and that we intend to. Is it really that incomprehensible that everything in this world is not about sex?

## — Infuriated in Belton, Mo.

**Dear Infuriated:** The letter I printed wasn't from your wife. It came from a woman in Minnesota. Not only had she never bought the alleged diamond earrings, but she had also been buying her lingerie from Victoria's Secret. In addition, his wife had caught him lying about his relationship with the recipient. Cool off.

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# Don't let unsuccessful dating experiences bring you down

**Dear Annie:** I am 21 years old and was asked out on my first date a month ago. I was thrilled. "Brad" and I went out three times, and we really seemed to like each other. Well, it's been two weeks since our last date, and I haven't heard from Brad except once when we exchanged small talk. He's made no effort to see me and hasn't returned any of my calls. Yesterday, I left him a message, asking why he's been blowing me off for two weeks. I haven't heard back yet.

I'm really hurt by this. Brad was the first guy I ever dated, and now I'm afraid something must be terribly wrong with me. I've been trying to keep myself busy and forget him, but I can't. I don't want to date ever again if this is what it feels like. How can I get over the hurt?

## — Heartbroken Hannah

**Dear Hannah:** Welcome to the world of dating — some men (and women) are jerks. Brad may have felt you were getting too serious, or he may have met someone else, but there is no reason to assume the fault is yours.

Since this was your first dating experience, it's possible you could use some pointers. Ask your closest friends to give you a brutally honest critique of your appear-

ance and your approach. Consider the "Brad experience" a way of getting your feet wet.

**Dear Annie:** While in high school, I could have written the letter from "Look What Followed Me Home in Texas." I, too, had a "tag-along" friend who wouldn't leave me and my friends alone even though she was unwelcome in my company. I finally politely asked her to go away, and then ignored her. Finally, I thought I could help her develop some needed life skills so someone would want her as a friend.

Optimistically, I tried to focus on her good qualities and stuck up for her when others maligned her. Soon my friends began to move away from me, and eventually, I felt strangled by her desperation.

I put too much of my energy into trying to help her while important years of my life went by help to her. And in the end, I was no help to her at all. I decided to separate myself from this girl, and with great effort, I, too, was mean after all else failed. One day, I just exploded. I'm not proud of what I said, but it worked. I never saw her again, and I feel I had a hundred-pound sack of problems lifted from my back.

## — Glad To Be Free

## Annie's Mailbox



**Dear Glad:** We appreciate your honesty and agree that you aren't obligated to be friends with everyone. We only wish you had found a kinder way to extricate yourself, instead of piling additional hurt on this unfortunate girl.

**Dear Annie:** My wife died several years ago. At a recent bereavement meeting, we were asked to bring a love letter or note written to or from our loved one to share with the group. I read a short note my wife wrote me on our 40th anniversary, but surprisingly, very few people had anything. I then asked who had received comments written on birthday or anniversary cards, and one woman said, "My husband always signed his cards, 'With much love.' " Another round of questions about the notes and framed it.

I wish I had more than the dozen handwritten notes from my dear husband, clutched and now cherished.

## — A Grieving Husband

**Dear Grieving Husband:** The piece you handwritten letter has gone the way of the Pony Express, and you have eloquently pointed out what has been lost. Our condolences.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marc Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to [annie@mailbox.comcast.net](mailto:annie@mailbox.comcast.net), or write to Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Creators Syndicate

## RELIGION

# What the heck? Blasphemies lose their bite

## Attitudes ease toward use of religious terms

BY JEFFREY WEISS

The Dallas Morning News

A chance remark can reveal a heck of a lot more than we intend. Last month, the editor of the Jewish weekly newspaper *The Forward* defended the inclusion of Madonna on the paper's annual list of most influential Jews in America. But isn't she Catholic? "She's a practitioner of the Kabbalah, so she's practicing Judaism, for Christ's sake," the editor, J.J. Goldberg, told the New York Daily News. "Well, not really for Christ's sake."

Most Americans would be amused by that line. Some would find it offensive. Either way, it's more than just a punch line: The editor of a Jewish newspaper can invoke a Christian deity without initially considering the literal meaning. And a major daily newspaper will print the quote as delivered.

Where has blasphemy gone, for Pete's sake? For many of us, the cultural taboos that made the colorful use of faith-linked words so dangerously satisfying have mostly vanished. And like Goldberg,

most of us don't think about the original connections when searching for words to shout when we want to add an oral exclamation point.

On the other hand, the words remain enough mojo that darned near any American who whacks his thumb is likely to sprinkle religious references among the words for family members, body parts and bodily functions.

Or as David Letterman said on his show recently: "Holy crap!"

There's evidence that human brains are hard-wired into using taboo words as emotional escape valves — the more taboo, the more effective.

Tourette Syndrome is a brain disorder that includes involuntary shouting of obscenities.

"They will tell you, if I say [sexual term involving a parent], it makes me feel better than when I say 'damn,'" said Timothy Jay, author of "Why We Curse" and a psychology professor at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts.

And which words are considered most taboo can offer an emotional X-ray into the core values of a person or a people.

"It tells you what a culture thinks is acceptable and what's not," said Reinhold Aman, editor of the scholarly *Maledicta: The International Journal of Verbal Aggression* and a lifetime professor of medieval literature.

By that measure, the sacred is

## What's the bleeping difference?

Experts describe different kinds of taboo words found in every human culture.

- Obscenity generally refers to sexual activity.
- Vulgarity generally refers to non-sexual bodily functions.
- Blasphemy generally refers to aspects of God, saints or other sacred topics ("Damn," and "hell," mild by today's standards, were once considered blasphemous.)

We don't have a specific name for nasty — yet not obscene or vulgar — terms aimed at family members: "Yer muddah wears Army boots!"

— The Dallas Morning News

no longer most sacred in America.

Sex, bodily functions and family, it seems, are more sensitive topics than religion, based on the relative frequency of use — and prohibitions against polite use — of various kinds of swear words.

The sacred and profane are an odd pairing in most contexts, but stand comfortably together in foul language in most cultures. That's partly because they both pull concepts where polite society says they don't belong, said Geoffrey Nunberg, author of "Going Nuclear: Language, Politics, and Culture in Controversial Times" and a researcher at Stanford University's Center for the Study of Language and Information.

Obscenity takes bedroom and bathroom activities and drags them out into the living room, he

said. Blasphemy, on the other hand, hauls heaven down into the common world.

Both feel satisfyingly "wrong" when we want to vent our frustrations.

Faith words are still a vital part of the salty lexicon in the United States and other countries. The specific words used shift from nation to nation.

And as with Goldberg, individual beliefs don't necessarily tip off what words someone will use.

There was a time when using religious language in the wrong place or manner could get you thrown in the stocks or even burned at the stake.

The longtime prohibitions against "bad words" fueled a dizzying array of euphemisms.

Heck and Sam Hill stand in for hell. Pete takes the place of God, as in "For Pete's sake." (There is

no link to St. Peter, word experts say.) Good golly originally had nothing to do with Miss Molly.

Like gosh and gad, golly is a safer word for "God." Jimmy Christmas, Jeez Louise, Judas Priest and even the Crocodile Hunter's "Crikey!" softened the straightforward J.C.

But if pop culture is an indicator, the need for euphemisms has waned.

Broadcast TV remains more cautious than many other cultural outlets. While "Oh my God!" can be heard virtually anywhere in prime time, ads are still a blasphemy-free zone.

Cable, from "The Sopranos" to "Bill Maher," bars few if any words. Comedy Channel's taboo-shredding "South Park" started as a short that featured a wrestling match between Jesus and Santa Claus.

Movie ratings also indicate a softening of attitudes, said Jim Wall, the former editor of Christian Century, who is a longtime adviser to the appeals board of the Motion Picture Association of America.

The softening of standards — or degradation, depending on your point of view — can be traced to the salty language of soldiers coming home from World War II, Aman said.

Vietnam, and the challenges to all authority during that era, gave another boost to blasphemy and obscenity filtering into standard use.

## Migrants' faith plays role in treks into United States

BY ANABELLE GARAY

The Associated Press

ALTAR, Mexico — Along a northbound dirt road, a young couple clad in jeans and T-shirts jumps out of an idling van and walks toward the path's edge, making for a white concrete box with an ornate, wrought-iron cross perched on top.

Dozens of candles — some lit, some melted, some broken — are crammed inside the 5-foot-high makeshift altar, along with statues of Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Jude, patron saint of lost causes.

As the couple kneels before the display with bowed heads, a little boy runs out of the van and kisses the ground.

The humble spot some 60 miles south of the Mexico-Arizona border serves as one of the last places where migrants worship before being shuttled to spots where they will attempt to slip illegally into the United States on foot.

On their trek for economic survival, migrants traveling through the treacherous Arizona desert also find themselves embarking on a religious journey. Many rely on saints to sustain them through the hardships, stopping to pray at icons or lighting votive candles to remember those who died along the way.

Before jumping aboard moving cargo trains during the trip north, 29-year-old Carlos Enrique Cano Yanez and other Central Americans he was traveling with would pray by the side of the tracks.

"We began to entrust ourselves to God

and asked that he would keep us safe," said Cano, a Honduran man who had journeyed to this Mexican community recently in preparation for an attempted trip to the United States.

People everywhere will often seek spiritual comfort during troubled times. And culturally, Latin Americans identify themselves as religious, even if they don't attend services regularly, said Jacqueline Hagan, co-director for the Center for Immigration Research at the University of Houston.

In the case of poor immigrants, reliance on faith is often heavier because they have virtually no other resources, Hagan said.

"The only resource they have is to turn to religion, and that's all they really have on the road as well," she said.

Before embarking on the trek into the United States, indigenous residents of the Guatemalan highlands seek counsel about whether to make the trip and when to go from evangelical pastors or the Black Church, a dark-skinned depiction of Jesus common in parts of Latin America, Hagan said.

Religion is their spiritual passport in the absence of authorization," she said. "They get sanctioned by God to do this."

For Cano and others on the train, reading the New Testament to each other brought comfort.

"You feel something ... you feel safer than being out there" without anything to sustain you, he said at a migrant shelter in Altar, a city that serves as a popular stag-



Two migrants light candles at an altar along the toll road to Sasabe, Mexico, on Sept. 30 in Altar, Mexico. The altar, crammed with candles and statues, is one of the last places migrants can stop and worship before traveling the dirt road used mainly for shuttling migrants to various spots where they will attempt to enter the United States.

ing area for migrants planning to cross the border at Arizona.

Migrants setting out on foot for the Arizona desert are often ill-equipped for the tough terrain and the lack of water, shade or roads. They don't know much about the desert, the frigid cold in the winter and searing heat during the summer, the snakes and spiders, and the bandas de bajeadores, or rip-off crews, hiding in wait for victims.

Once they reach their destinations, many will again frequent a church or shrine to offer thanks for their arrival.

And even if they don't make their destination before being caught and sent back, migrants often attribute how far they made it to religious intervention, Hagan said.

Many of the men who stay at the migrant shelter in Altar have been caught trying to enter the United States. With nowhere to rest or eat and hardly any money left, they wait there in the hopes that they can attempt another crossing, said coordinator Francisco Garcia.

Many tell Garcia, "Si Diosito quierio, lo voy a volver a hacer." ("If the Good Lord is willing, I'm going to do it again.")

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## AFC &amp; NFC championship games: Atlanta Falcons at Philadelphia Eagles &amp; New England Patriots at Pittsburgh Steelers



Steelers LB Joey Porter

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Pittsburgh

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AP PHOTOS; PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY MORGAN LOOSLI/Stars and Stripes

# State of frenzy in Penn.

## Two NFL teams, two title games — and no middle ground

BY ALAN ROBINSON

The Associated Press

**I**N PENNSYLVANIA, either you're an Eagles fan or a Steelers fan — not both. This year, however, the road to the Super Bowl in Jacksonville runs along the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

Twirl a Steelers Terrible Towel east of state capital Harrisburg, and you're liable to get it wrapped around your neck.

Wear a green No. 5 Donovan McNabb jersey west of State College, and you risk being doused with a Rolling Rock.

This clash of styles and loyalties comes to a head Sunday when two NFL conference championship games will be played in the same state on the same day, with kickoffs 3½ hours apart.

This is the first time a state has hosted both conference title games in the same season, and it's fitting that it's happening in Pennsylvania, the site of the acknowledged first pro football game (in Pittsburgh) 113 years ago and a hotbed for the sport almost ever since.

Ordinarily, this would be a tricky political football for most constituent-conscious governors, but not Pennsylvania's Ed Rendell.

The former Philadelphia mayor will do what he always does on a football Sunday — watch the Eagles, cheer wildly, then appear on Comcast SportsNet's postgame show and offer analysis, this time for the Falcons-Eagles NFC championship game.

On the opposite side of the state, the Steelers will face the New England Patriots for the AFC championship, but Pittsburghers must be content with the governor's well wishes — though he attended last weekend's Jets-Steelers game. Rendell is firmly sided with the Eagles, and will stay that way even if the two Keystone State teams face off in the Super Bowl in Jacksonville, Fla., on Feb. 6.

Politics is important to Rendell, but this is football, and there is nothing politically correct about football.

"If I really felt it was important to the outcome of the game or important to the emotional psyche of the people of the Pittsburgh area... I would go," he said. "But I don't have that inflated opinion of myself."

Plus he's an Eagles fan, and that's that. There is no middle ground in this state of frenzy.

Bridget Healy, 33, of suburban

McCandless Township is superstitious beyond reason. She dons a Terrible Towel atop her head for every game — wearing it forward when the Steelers have the ball, backward when they're on defense, crocheting wildly all the while to calm her nerves.

"I can take it off [only] on commercials and at halftime," she said.

Of course, the fan bases for both teams extend far beyond the commonwealth's border — especially that of the Steelers, whose national identity has rivaled that of the Packers and Cowboys since they won four Super Bowls in six years during the 1974-79 seasons.

Steelers rookie quarterback Ben Roethlisberger's No. 7 jersey is the NFL's top seller worldwide, and there are far more Steelers-related items for sale on eBay than for any other team.

"That's what's great about playing with the Steelers — wherever you go, you kind of feel like you're playing at home," Steelers wide receiver Hines Ward said.

Visiting teams certainly don't feel that way in Pittsburgh or Philadelphia. Vikings quarterback Daunte Culpepper complained some rambunctious Philly fans harassed family members and spit on them during the Eagles'

27-14 divisional playoff victory last Sunday.

"The hysteria among the two cities is pretty equal," said Steelers wide receiver Sean Morey, who played for Philadelphia from 2001-03. "They live and die with their teams. In Pittsburgh they bleed gold and black and in Philadelphia they bleed green. It's actually kind of a treat to be in situations in my career where I've played on teams where the fans care so much."

Steelers and Eagles fans are considered among the most loyal and knowledgeable, as the players soon realize. Roethlisberger, whose 14-0 record is unprecedented for a rookie quarterback, was taken aback during one of his initial Pittsburgh shopping trips when fans came up offering unsolicited advice.

"There are Steelers fans everywhere," Roethlisberger said.

"Hopefully, we can continue to impress them and keep them on our side."

Good idea in Pennsylvania, where all this fervency has created perceptible angst. The Eagles have lost three consecutive NFC title games, the past two at home, and their fans — confident as they are — dread the thought of another loss for a franchise that

last won an NFL championship in 1960.

"I would say it's one of the most hostile environments I think a player can play in because the fans are rude as hell, the crowd is definitely behind their Eagles and it's just a situation where it's you against them," Falcons running back Warrick Dunn said.

"No disrespect to our fans, but the fans in Philly are a little bit different."

There's a similar feeling in Pittsburgh, which last celebrated a Super Bowl victory 25 years ago. This is the fifth time since 1995 the Steelers have hosted the AFC title game, but they won only one of the previous four.

No wonder Bill Cowher, the most tenured of current NFL coaches in his 13th season, doesn't talk about winning One for the Thumb — the Steelers' rallying cry since they first began looking for a fifth Super Bowl title after the 1979 season.

"I'm looking for any finger, personally," he said, displaying a right hand barren of jewelry. "They're all open."

Until one of its teams wins the Super Bowl, Pennsylvania can be called the state of anxiety. And, even if it happens, only part of the state will be pleased.

"There's a similar sense of urgency in both cities," Morey said.



AFC championship game - New England Patriots at Pittsburgh Steelers - 12:30 a.m. CET Monday; AFN-Atlantic, Pacific, Radio

# Steelers backs want to atone for failures

## Bettis, Staley both know feeling of losing in conference championships

By ALAN ROBINSON  
The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — If Duce Staley needed a team that could sympathize with his three consecutive NFC championship game losses, the Pittsburgh Steelers were it.

When Staley moved cross-state from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh as a free agent early last year, he went from one team determined to prove it wasn't a big-game failure to another.

The Steelers are a 1-3 since 1995 as a home-field favorite in AFC championships — a record not quite as bad as the Eagles', but close. No wonder the Eagles, who play Atlanta on Sunday, and the Steelers are desperate to avoid a fourth loss each as they play host to the two conference title games. "He's focused in on this game," running back Jerome Bettis said of Staley's role in Sunday's Patriots-Steelers AFC championship. "He thinks it's his best opportunity."

Staley, a three-time 1,000-yard rusher in Philadelphia, left after his carries were cut by two-thirds last season amid a three-back rotation. He was Pittsburgh's primary runner when the season started, with four 100-yard games in a five-game stretch before he injured a hamstring Oct. 31 against New England.

Bettis, the No. 5 rusher in NFL history but mostly a goal-line specialist until Staley got hurt, stepped in with seven 100-yard games as many starts.

Whatever disappointment Staley felt in at least temporarily losing his job has been tempered by his friendship with Bettis.

With the Super Bowl just one victory away, he also doesn't want to disrupt an unimaginably good season that has seen the Steelers win a club-record 15 in a row.

"This wouldn't work on a lot of teams — two guys that love the ball, two guys that want the ball, two guys that are competitive," Staley said.

To Bettis, it's worked because both have put their egos aside at key moments: Bettis when he was benched to start the season, Staley when Bettis remained the starter even after Staley was healthy again.

Staley had only 123 yards in three games during the second half of the season, but had 54 yards in 11 carries in Pittsburgh's 20-17 overtime playoff victory over the Jets on Saturday. He took over in the fourth quarter after Bettis developed leg cramps.

The 255-pound Bettis will start against New England, but coach Bill Cowher said the 242-pound Staley will play in the first half.

"You have two guys who understand the situation and the gravity of it, who do not want to derail the train because of egos," Bettis said.

Staley ran for 125 yards and Bettis had 65 in Pittsburgh's 34-20 victory Oct. 31 that ended New England's record 21-game winning streak. The Steelers again want to pound the two power backs behind All-Pro line men Alan Faneca and Jeff Hartung, and the Patriots' common extra defenders to the run and create opportunities for rookie Ben Roethlisberger to throw.

"You really have to bring your



Pittsburgh Steelers running back Jerome Bettis (36) started the season as a backup used in goal-line situations but rushed for at least 100 yards in each of his seven starts when Duce Staley was injured.



Running back Duce Staley (22) left the Philadelphia Eagles, losers of three straight NFC title games, for the Pittsburgh Steelers, who since 1995 are 1-3 as a home-field favorite in AFC championship games.

lunch when you tackle these guys because they are so big," Patriots linebacker Tedy Bruschi said.

"We are going to have to stop the run to win this game. They are going to roll Staley at us. They are going to roll Bettis at us."

Getting the running game going is the Steelers' No. 1 priority, especially since Patriots star

## QB: Brady, Roethlisberger pile up wins, not statistics

QBs, FROM PAGE 34

The next week in Pittsburgh, he injured his ribs in the first half against the Steelers and Bledsoe relieved him and threw for the Patriots' only offensive touchdown in a 24-17 win. Brady was back for the Super Bowl, led the Patriots to an upset over St. Louis and established himself as one of the game's top quarterbacks — not a statistical machine, but a winner.

Both quarterbacks have a lot of support, especially on defense.

The Patriots set a record with 21 straight wins — 18 in the regular season — before the loss in Pittsburgh.

They have done it with everyone on the roster making big plays — especially Willie McGinest, Tedy Bruschi, Mike Vrabel and Richard Seymour on defense and Corey Dillon and five wide receivers on offense.

But when starters go down, others step up — like wide receiver Troy Brown, who had a punt return for a touchdown in the title game in Pittsburgh three years ago. Brown plays offense, special teams and is a third cornerback because both starters are out.

The Steelers averaged 154 rushing yards a game in the regular season, second in the league. Their defense allowed the fewest points in the league three years ago. James Farrior had a career year at linebacker and second-year safety Troy Polamalu emerged as a playmaker.

But quarterback is a glamour position, so Brady and Roethlisberger are likely to get the credit.

"This business is about being accountable," Steelers coach Bill Cowher said of Roethlisberger, who made no excuses for last season's mistakes. "To admit when you haven't done well is not a sign of weakness. It's a sign of strength. If you're going to have a bad game. But you learn from it, you move on, you grow from it."

# Being underdog is extra motivation for Pittsburgh

By DAVE GOLDBERG  
The Associated Press

The Pittsburgh Steelers got some extra motivation when they were released for the AFC championship game. They were 3-point underdogs to New England despite having the NFL's best record, despite being at home and despite having beaten them twice.

Some were surprised by the perceived slight, though that Pittsburgh carries a 15-game winning streak into Sunday.

The Steelers lose it, though. What's better than being able to retell the old "We get no respect line" in other words, no one wants to be the favorite.

"They deserve it," Pittsburgh cornerback Chad Scott says.

## NFL picks

"They're the champions. They played very well against the Colts and we just barely beat the Jets. That's why they're favored."

True, though the odds seem to ignore the Steelers' 34-20 victory over the Patriots on Oct. 31. Then again, the Patriots played that game without Corey Dillon, who ran for 144 yards against Indianapolis last weekend.

This is the first time the visiting team is favored in the AFC title game since the 1997 season, when Denver was favored by 2½ at Pittsburgh. The Broncos won 24-21 and went on to win the Super Bowl.

Minnesota was a 2-point road favorite against the New York Giants four years ago in the NFC and that didn't work very well: The Giants won 41-0.

In Patriots-Steelers, the spread reflects the quarterbacks.

Tom Brady has been the Super Bowl MVP in two of his three seasons as New England's starter, while the Steelers' Ben Roethlisberger is a rookie whose two interceptions almost did in his team last week against the Jets.

Yes, Roethlisberger is 14-0, far better than any rookie quarterback ever fared in the league, and we have a unanimous choice for NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year. But "rookie" and "championship" are words that don't mesh. And yes, the Patriots' party line about Pittsburgh is, "We're

playing the best team in the league."

Not until proven otherwise. ... **PATRIOTS, 20-19.**

Atlanta (plus 5) at Philadelphia: The Eagles demonstrated in their win over Minnesota last week that they don't need Terrell Owens to be effective on offense. That game also showed why Philadelphia lost its third straight NFC title game last season — they didn't have Brian Westbrook, who like Owens is a threat from anywhere on the field.

The Falcons have a guy like that, too.

His name is Michael Vick and he plays quarterback with his legs as much as with his arm. In fact, he might be the answer to the Eagles' blitzes: They might be able to get by blockers, but Vick

is an escape artist like no one else.

Still, no one can beat Philadelphia by himself. And Donovan McNabb is a pretty good escape artist at QB for the Eagles.

The Eagles probably have the most to fear from their own psyche — those three straight losses have their fans scared. But Philadelphia should win this one, especially if it snows, as forecast. The Falcons are an indoor team, and indoor teams have trouble in elements (see, Minnesota about now).

Unless Vick is even more slippery on slippery footing.

Probably not. ... **EAGLES, 24-13.**

Week 3: 3-1 (spread, 3-1) (straight up).

Playoffs: 5-3 (spread, 4-4) (straight up).

NFC championship game Atlanta Falcons at Philadelphia Eagles - 9 p.m. CET Sunday; AFN-Atlantic, Pacific, Radio

## History: Title games haunt Atlanta

HISTORY, FROM BACK PAGE

Last year, Carolina came to Philadelphia, ignored the elements and stunned the Eagles 14-3. Two years ago, Tampa Bay closed out Veterans Stadium with a 27-10 win, its first playoff victory when the temperature was above 40 degrees. In 2002, the Eagles lost to St. Louis 29-24.

"This is a totally different team, different players, different philosophies," said running back Brian Westbrook, who missed last year's playoffs with an injury. "We're going in with a fresh attitude and we're ready to play."

"We have some pressure. We put that pressure on ourselves because we want to win. Anytime you expect a lot of success, you're going to put a little bit of pressure on yourself. I don't think as a team we feel any pressure from anybody else except from the people that we have inside our own locker room."

The Eagles can't afford to be up-tight this time. They realize another loss would be devastating for a city that is starved for a winner. Philly hasn't celebrated a major championship since the 76ers won the NBA title in 1983, and the city hasn't won an NFL title since 1960.

Fans have pinned their hopes on the beloved football team. But considering how often teams seem to come up short here, no one is planning a parade down Broad Street just yet.

"I want to win this for myself, but I would love to see those peo-



The Eagles' Brian Dawkins says, "I want to win this for myself."

ple have a great time after that victory, because they have definitely supported us through some tough times. I know they're trying to get to the position we're in. Eagles All-Pro safety Brian Dawkins said.

Atlanta fans know a little about heart-breaking losses. The Braves have won an unprecedented 13 consecutive division titles, but only one World Series championship in that span.

The Falcons made it to the Super Bowl five years ago, with two players — Pro Bowl linebacker Keith Brooking and backup defensive linemen Travis Hall — remaining from the team's only NFC title.

Atlanta upset the Vikings in Minnesota to reach the 1999 Super Bowl, before losing to Denver in the playoffs.

One stat working in the Falcons' favor: Since 1990, the No. 1 seed is just 8-6 in the NFC championship.

"It was great for them in '98, but that was a long time ago. This was a different team. We want to go to the Super Bowl," linebacker Chris Draf said.

Same goes for the Eagles — again.

## Key to Falcons' fortunes

After rift with Gruden, GM turned Atlanta into a winner

By STEVE SPRINGER

Los Angeles Times

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. — It was a clash of wills that threatened to tear apart the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

On one side was coach Jon Gruden, once the boy wonder of coaching, a renowned workaholic so confident in his own philosophy and methods that he walked out on Al Davis, rather than submit to the Raider way.

On the other side was general manager Rick McKay, whose claim to fame in his younger years was that he was the son of legendary Southern Cal coach John McKay.

When would you take? The Glazer family, owners of the Buccaneers, cast their lot with Gruden. Arthur Blank, owner of the Atlanta Falcons, hired McKay away in December 2003.

A year later, the Buccaneers, winners of a Super Bowl only two years ago, finished at the bottom of their division — where they had been through much of their existence — having gone 5-11.

The Falcons, 5-11 and last in their division a year ago, went 11-5 and will play the Eagles on Sunday in Philadelphia in the NFC championship game.

Is McKay just one lucky guy, fortunate to be in the right place at the right time?

Nobody around the Falcons, or in the offices of NFL headquarters, thinks so. Nobody talks about good fortune or coincidence when McKay's name comes up.

Having built a Super Bowl winner in Tampa Bay and then rebuilt the Falcons in one year, McKay has an image so strong that, when speculation turns to a possible successor for NFL Commissioner Paul Tagliabue, the first name on most lists is Rich McKay's.

"It doesn't happen because the guy was lucky," said Reggie Roberts, Falcons vice president of communications. "It happened because the guy is in charge of football operations and knows what he is doing."

McKay isn't about to get into a public feud with Gruden, and he's not about to pat himself on the back either.

"It's nice to hear some of the things people say, but I just feel very fortunate to be here," he said.

Having co-founded Home Depot, and then spent an estimated \$545 million to buy the Falcons, Blank knows about high finance. But he also knows that what he doesn't know is football personnel.

"I knew the best thing I could do was to hire the right people," Blank said. "I know where I belong."

Not in the general manager's chair, making trades or picking draft choices. So Blank began his search for someone who could effectively fill that seat.

"The name that constantly surfaced as being one of the tops in the league was Rich McKay," Blank said.

Thus began a long courtship.

When Gruden was hired, without McKay's being consulted, McKay started to talk seriously with Blank.

It soon became increasingly obvious that he and Gruden had different views of the future.

When Gruden was hired, it was obvious that he and Gruden had different views of the future. When Gruden was hired, it was obvious that he and Gruden had different views of the future.

Having inherited the league's worst defense, McKay admitted him, but his approach and mine were very different," McKay said. "Where the franchise was going philosophically didn't fit in with my vision. He had done a great job as coach of getting us over the top. I thought it was better if the general manager moved on."

Under McKay, the Falcons got rid of seven players in the offseason. They sacked the right attitude, and switched from a 3-4 to a 4-3 defensive alignment. Atlanta went on to lead the league in sacks for the first time in its history and moved up to 14th in defense this season.

There were 25 new names on this year's roster, but the biggest change, says one organization figure after another, is the attitude.

And the 45-year-old McKay, Said Roberts, "He's super smart, with an Ivy League (Princeton) education, but he never puts on a face that says, 'I'm smarter than you.' He can mix with corporate CEOs, but he can also be one of the boys and that's what endears him to the players."

"The important thing is not just the rings and the championships," the Falcon owner said. "It's also who you're in the room with, who you're paddling beside you. At the end of the day, we are all human beings."

## How the Falcons and Eagles match up:

PHILADELPHIA — Matchups for Sunday's NFC championship between the Atlanta Falcons and the Philadelphia Eagles.

WHEN THE FALCONS HAVE THE BALL  
Atlanta's run-first offense is led by quarterback Matt Ryan, who has thrown for 3,903 yards on the ground, while the backfield of Derrick Brown (112) and Reggie Brown (42) combined for 1,615 yards (112 yards per game).

Atlanta's offense is led by Matt Ryan, who has thrown for 3,903 yards on the ground, while the backfield of Derrick Brown (112) and Reggie Brown (42) combined for 1,615 yards (112 yards per game).

Trotter and D's Corey Smith (20), Darwin Downs (10) and Hollis Thomas (2) are critical to slowing the run when the Falcons' running game is hot. The backfield keeps it alive off it, led by D's Deven Koon (12) and Reggie Brown (42).

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only 82 yards in last Wednesday's 47-17 rout of St. Louis, but for 119. He's already faced the Eagles in the playoffs, in a 26-10 loss in a second-round matchup two years ago in which he was held to 30 yards rushing.

When THE EAGLES HAVE THE BALL  
QB Donovan McNabb (5) excels at spreading the offense, keeping defenses off-balance. Even without his favorite target, WR Terrell Davis (51), McNabb has multiple options, including RB Brian Westbrook, who missed last year's playoffs.

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## NFC CHAMPIONSHIP

Sunday, Jan. 23 at Lincoln Financial Field

## Philly hopes for a different outcome

Atlanta Falcons 12-5 Philadelphia Eagles 14-3

The Eagles, losers of three straight NFL championship games, look to turn things around when they host the Atlanta Falcons in Philadelphia.

Falcons upset the Vikings in Minnesota in the 1998 NFL championship game to advance to their only Super Bowl appearance.

W 47-17 vs. St. Louis DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS W 27-14 vs. Minnesota

FINAL 2004 STANDINGS

W	L	CT	P	PA	HOME	AWAY	AVG	WFC	DM
11	5		688	340	337	7-1	-4	4	4
13	3		812	266	271	6-2	-2	11	6

Avg. yards per game

Offense

regular season

postseason

Defense

FALCONS EAGLES FALCONS EAGLES

Scoring 21.2-27.0 24.1-27.0 22.1-17.0 16.2-14.0

Passing 150.8-70.0 248.7-286.0 220.4-262.0 200.8-288.0

Rushing 167.0-327.0 102.4-109.0 105.7-177.0 118.9-97.0

Total 317.8-397.0 351.1-395.0 325.4-339.0 379.7-385.0

Team leaders

FALCONS EAGLES

PASSING YARDS Michael Vick (2,313) Donovan McNabb (8,375)

RUSHING YARDS Warrick Dunn (1,106) Brian Westbrook (812)

RECEIVING YARDS Alge Crumler (774) Terrell Owens (1,200)

SOURCE: National Football League



NFC championship game - Atlanta Falcons at Philadelphia Eagles - 9 p.m. CET Sunday; AFN-Atlantic, Pacific, Radio

## Kearse: Pass-rushing end figures to be Vick's spy

KEARSE, FROM BACK PAGE

"He's the kind of player that if you break down and try to do anything, he'll make you look so silly," Kearse said. "He'll leave you right there looking so silly. In a lot of situations, we're hoping to try to run through and make him pick a side, and hopefully the rest of our defense will be in pursuit to do whatever to contain him or stop him."

"Hopefully, we'll be able to match up speed with speed. I'm not saying in any way that I'm faster than Vick, but I think I can do some pretty good things as far as not letting him get outside and helping (to keep) our defensive backs from covering (him) all day."

Kearse, 28, lived up to his nickname "The Freak" during his five seasons with the Tennessee Titans because of his rare combination of speed and strength. He led Philadelphia this season with 7½ sacks, despite being double-teamed in most games. Some in the NFL believed Kearse had become overrated in recent years as he produced 36 sacks in his first three seasons but just 19 in three seasons since — but the Eagles made him their primary defensive target after a 14-3 loss to Carolina in the NFC championship game last January. Coach Andy Reid has repeatedly praised Kearse's ability to harass a quarterback and alter his rhythm.

Kearse was a persistent nuisance to Minnesota quarterback Daunte Culpepper — another willing and able runner — last Sunday, but Vick's rushing skills surpass anything seen before at his position. He is also a left-handed passer, giving a side of the field on rollouts and bootlegs that most quarterbacks do not, so Kearse, a natural left end, likely will be positioned more on the right side to put him in closer striking distance. He is relishing the opportunity to blitz Vick, as well as shadow him when the Eagles think he will run. "I prefer to do both of them," Kearse said. "I prefer to be a pass rusher if that's what we need, or if we need a spy, I'm ready to do that."

The Eagles can ill-afford to allow Vick to get comfortable, and they are intent on pounding him whenever possible. They took a similar approach to Minnesota receiver Randy Moss, and he ended up having no impact on the game. Vick will have the ball in his hands on every offensive play and does not shy away from creating ample opportunities to punish him.

"With a guy like Mike, as many times as you can put a hat (helmet) on him, put a hat on him," Eagles' Pro Bowl safety Brian Dawkins said. "To make it known and clear that if you do run the

ball, there is a chance you will be hit. I'm not saying that there's going to be anything done outside the lines, but you have to make sure that's an emphasis. If you run the ball and you do get some yards, we are looking to tackle with this defense."

Philadelphia defensive coordinator Jim Johnson espouses aggressive packages, and the Falcons expect him to concoct some creative measures to address their three-pronged running attack. Vick is aided by the combination of bulldozing running back T.J. Duckett and the slythly Warick Dunn, who can turn the slightest crack into a huge gain. The Falcons ran for 327 yards against St. Louis last week, giving Johnson much to ponder in preparation for Sunday's game.

"I'm partial. I think (Johnson) is the best in the game at what he does," Reid said. "He does such a great job of studying offenses, particularly protections and the schemes. He has anticipation, skills and instincts. A lot of that is from work study and a lot of it he just has. He does a heck of a job."

If this defense is at all vulnerable, it is against the run. The Eagles routinely conceded more than 150 yards per game early in the season — Pittsburgh rushed for 252 yards against them in November — but middle linebacker Jeremiah Trotter, who returned to the Pro Bowl after being released by Washington before the season, was adamant those problems are behind him.

"We still want to have a problem (stopping the run)," Trotter repeated Wednesday. "We still won't have a problem."

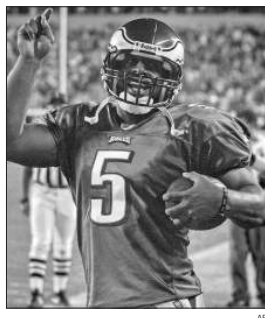
Trotter, who was edited with seven tackles, a half-sack, an interception and two pass defenses against Minnesota, realizes what type of effort it will take for this defense — which is not particularly large up front — to stop Atlanta on the ground.

"I've definitely got to have probably my greatest game ever, and I look forward to doing that," Trotter said. "You're definitely going to see myself making a lot more plays than I did last year, particularly because they do run the ball. The middle linebacker is supposed to make a lot of plays when a team runs the ball on you. I'm looking forward to doing that."

Trotter was a part of the Eagles team that lost in the NFC championship game to St. Louis in 2002 (29-24), then watched on television the past two years as they fell to Tampa Bay (27-10) and then Carolina. Another loss in the game would crush Philadelphia's rabid fan base and mark the franchise as the Buffalo Bills of the conference championship game, and Trotter has no intention of playing on an underdog team in the biggest game of the season yet again.



In a 20-6 playoff loss at Philadelphia two years ago, Michael Vick, above, threw for 274 yards and ran for 30 but the Falcons failed to score a touchdown.



Philadelphia's Donovan McNabb, above, had his best season this year: 64 percent completions, 3,875 yards, 31 touchdowns and only eight interceptions.

## Revolutionary quarterbacks blow away all stereotypes

BY PAUL NEWBERRY  
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — They are quarterbacks for a new age, transcending racial stereotypes and tossing aside the accepted notions of how the job should be done once the ball is snapped.

Donovan McNabb never viewed the pocket as some protective cocoon, to be defended at all costs. The Philadelphia Eagles' star demonstrated that a 20-yard run sure beats a 10-yard sack. Imagine that. When this is a social media age, it's not surprising that McNabb nudged open and ripped it from its hinges. The Atlanta Falcons have a quarterback like no one that has come before — an implausible morphing of John Elway's powerful arm, Barry Sanders' jittery moves and Deion Sanders' one-gear-higher-than-everyone-else speed.

Now, they meet again, two old friends who've had such a profound impact on the NFL. Get ready for McNabb vs. Vick. The Sequel.

And this time, one of them is going to the Super Bowl.

"I don't care what sport you're talking about. It doesn't get no better than this," said Falcons safety Keion Carpenter, who sat out the season with an injury.

The buildup to this enticing matchup showed just how much times have changed since Doug Williams was asked, "How long have you been a black quarterback?"

There was plenty of talk about the white stuff — snow was predicted in Philly, accompanied by all sorts of theories about its impact on the game. Barely anyone mentioned the color of the two quarterbacks' skin, which just happens to be black.

This is a social media age, and the two quarterbacks of color. For the first time, two black QBs will meet in a conference final. Either McNabb or Vick will go on to become just the third black QB to start in the Super Bowl, following Williams (1988) and Steve McNair (2000).

The one that traces those historic footsteps most likely will be the one who gets the most help from his teammates — particularly if the game bogs down in windy, icy conditions, becoming a battle of attrition that must be won with defense and the fewest mistakes on offense.

If nothing else, history shows the folly of turning a game that involves so many into a personal battle between two quarterbacks, no matter how wondrous their talents. Two years ago, McNabb's Eagles hosted Vick's Falcons in a second-round playoff game that had the buildup of a heavyweight fight.

Alas, McNabb had to protect a gimpy ankle, having missed the final six games of the regular season,

and Vick struggled against Philadelphia's fearsome defense. The Eagles advanced to the NFC championship game by grinding out a 20-6 victory.

Philadelphia lost the following week to Tampa Bay, the second of what has grown to three straight defeats in the season's penultimate round. Even more galling to the green-clad faithful, the past two NFC title game losses have come at home.

At this point, it's Super Bowl or bust for the Eagles, who carry the hopes — and the weight — of an entire city. Philadelphia hasn't won a major sports championship since the 76ers captured the NBA title in 1983. The Eagles' last NFL crown came in 1960 — six seasons before the Super Bowl was born.

"I don't know who the pressure's on," Vick said, "but I know the pressure's not on us."

McNabb's résumé is impressive — five straight Pro Bowl selections, four straight division titles, six playoff victories — but it's incomplete. As Dan Marino and Jim Kelly can attest, a quarterback gets only so many chances to achieve greatness in the Super Bowl. Who's to say that McNabb, while 1960, will ever get this close again.

"Your first goal as a quarterback is to win the Super Bowl," he said. "It's sad sometimes. So many great quarterbacks have played this game ... who didn't have the opportunity to win a Super Bowl. They get overlooked because of that. It's not fair."

While these two quarterbacks are linked by their unconventional styles, there's a definite disparity on the stat sheet.

McNabb has run less this season than in any of his previous five years (even 2002, when he played only 10 regular-season games).

While still a threat with his legs — 41 carries for 220 yards and three touchdowns — he spent more time using his arm. It paid off with the best passing numbers of his career: 38 completions, 3,875 yards, 31 touchdowns, only eight interceptions.

By comparison, Vick's passing numbers look downright mediocre — 56 percent, 2,313 yards, 14 touchdowns, 12 interceptions — but he isn't measured by the same standard as any other quarterback, even McNabb.

Vick is the Falcons' second-leading rusher with 902 yards and led the NFL with 7.5 yards per carry. At any moment, he is capable of transforming an ordinary play into something spectacular.

# Wilkins resigns as Knicks coach

## Assistant Williams will guide team for rest of season

BY JOHN NICHOLSON

The Associated Press

GREENBURGH, N.Y. — Lenny Wilkins resigned as coach of the New York Knicks on Saturday, likely ending his Hall of Fame career after barely a year with his hometown team.

General manager Isiah Thomas said assistant coach Herb Williams will direct the team for the rest of the season. Williams coached the Knicks for one game a year ago between Don Chaney's firing and the hiring of Wilkins.

"This is a difficult decision for me to make at this time because I really wanted to help the New York team get back to being an elite team," Wilkins said in a prepared statement. "But after a lot of consideration, I feel it's the right time for me. The right move and best for all involved."

Thomas offered the 67-year-old Wilkins a front-office position, but Wilkins said he is not sure whether he will remain with the team. Wilkins, who did not take

questions after reading his statement, has two years and \$10 million left on his contract, which Thomas said the team will honor no matter what Wilkins decides.

"It's something I'll consider," Wilkins said. "Right now I feel I need to get away for a little time with my family."

The resignation, the first time Wilkins has stepped down or been fired during a season, followed a lengthy meeting with Thomas after the Knicks' last-season home loss to Houston on Friday night, their ninth defeat in 10 games.

"It's a very difficult day for myself and for the players," Thomas said. "He's a great man and a great coach. We'll miss him. ... I think he just came to a point where enough was enough."

Wilkins is the winningest and losingest coach in NBA history, with a 1,332-1,155 record in 32 seasons with Seattle, Portland, Cleveland, Atlanta, Toronto and New York. He won his lone NBA title with the SuperSonics in 1979 and coached the United States to

a gold medal in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

Last season, Wilkins led the Knicks to their first playoff berth since 2001, going 23-19 after taking over the team following Chaney's firing. The Knicks were then swept by New Jersey in the first round.

The 46-year-old Williams finished his 18-year playing career with the Knicks and joined the coaching staff in December 2001. He also has coached the club's summer league team.

"I'm excited for Herb to have this opportunity," Thomas said. "He's very knowledgeable about the game and the players respect him."

The free-falling Knicks have three games left on their four-game homestand — Milwaukee, Phoenix and Cleveland — before hitting the road for a six-game trip that includes stops in Detroit, Sacramento and Phoenix. They will then return home to play Shaquille O'Neal and Eastern Conference-leading Miami.



Lenny Wilkins, who coached 32 seasons in Seattle, Portland, Cleveland, Atlanta, Toronto and New York, has the most wins and losses in NBA history (1,332-1,155). His only NBA title was with Seattle in 1979.

A nine-time NBA All-Star in his 15-year playing career with St. Louis, Seattle, Cleveland and Portland, Wilkins and John Wooden are the only Hall of Fame members elected as both a player and coach.

And in 1997, Wilkins — a player-coach for four seasons in Seat-

tle and Portland — was the only man selected as both one of the 50 greatest players in NBA history and one of the 10 greatest coaches.

Wilkins starred at Boys High School in Brooklyn and was an All-America guard at Providence.

AP Basketball Writer Chris Sheridan contributed to this report.

# New Mexico St. hoops coach Henson retires with 779 wins

The Associated Press

LAS CRUCES, N.M. — Ailing New Mexico State coach Lou Henson retired Saturday, 21 win shy of becoming only the fifth Division I basketball coach with 800 victories.

Henson, 73, has been in a wheelchair and faced assorted health problems in recent years, from cancer to viral encephalitis. He has not coached this season but had planned to return Jan. 8. However, he was hospitalized with pneumonia Jan. 6.

"I have always been a very demanding coach. I expect my players to give 100 percent or they come out of the game," Henson said in a news conference on campus. "I can expect to lose of my self. So because I am physically unable to give my all, I am taking myself out of the game."

Henson retires with a career record of 779-413, the sixth winningest in Division I history. Among active coaches, only Bob Knight has more victories.

Henson coached last season despite being diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, a form of cancer. The cancer is now in remission, but in September he was hospitalized with viral encephalitis, a disease that left him partially paralyzed.

**Pats Del Seymour won't start, but might play in title game**

FOXBORO, Mass. — New England defensive lineman Richard

## Sports briefs

Seymour will not start in Sunday's AFC title game against the Pittsburgh Steelers because of a left knee injury, though might play as a substitute.

"We'll see where he is," coach Bill Belichick said Friday before the team's flight to Pittsburgh. "Maybe he can give us some situational play during the game."

Seymour, one of two Patriots on the All-Pro team, remained on the injury report as questionable, meaning there was a 50 percent chance he would not play. The only other Patriots reported as injured were linebacker Ted Johnson, who was probable with the flu, and fullback Patrick Pass, who was questionable with a sore ankle.

Starting cornerbacks Ty Law and Tyrone Poole finished the season on injured reserve.

**Niners hire HOF LB Singletary as Nolan's top assistant**

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — Hall of Fame linebacker Mike Singletary was hired to be the San Francisco 49ers' assistant head coach and linebackers coach Friday.

Singletary, who spent 12 NFL seasons with the Chicago Bears, spent the past two seasons as a linebackers coach with the Baltimore Ravens in his first coaching job. He worked closely with Ravens defensive coordinator

Mike Nolan, who was hired as the 49ers' head coach on Wednesday.

Singletary, 46, played for the Bears from 1981-92 and was voted the NFL's top defensive player in 1985 and 1988. After finishing his career with 1,488 tackles, he was inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame in 1998.

**Miller's chance for sweep halted by postponement**

KITZBUHEL, Austria — Bode Miller's chance for a rare sweep of five events in a season ended Saturday when a World Cup downhill was postponed because of wet snow, forcing the cancellation of the combined.

The race will be rescheduled in Kvitfjell, Norway, the International Ski Federation said. The combined adds times from Saturday's downhill and Sunday's slalom.

Organizers called off the Hahnenkamm downhill for the first time in 12 years but the slalom was expected to run Sunday despite predictions of poor weather.

There are only two combined events on the World Cup schedule this season. The other, a new version of the competition, was held last week in Wengen, Switzerland.

In December, Miller won a night slalom for a sweep of all four disciplines — slalom, giant slalom, super giant slalom and downhill. He did so in 16 days, the shortest span in World Cup history.

Miller leads the overall World

Cup rankings with 1,048 points, with Austria's Benjamin Raich next at 850.

**Slovenia's Maze wins women's giant slalom**

MARIBOR, Slovenia — Tina Maze won a World Cup giant slalom before her home fans Saturday, her third victory in the event this season.

She was first on both runs on the Goldenfox course on a cold, sunny day, finishing in 2 minutes, 16.36 seconds.

The top finishers for the United States were Julie Mancuso (tied for fifth) and Lindsey Kildow (ninth).

**U.S. Soccer sides bicker over length of no-strike clause**

NEW YORK — With the U.S. Soccer Federation still threatening to use a replacement team of minor league players in next month's World Cup qualifier, lawyers for players and management argued over the length of a no-strike clause when they met with a federal mediator for the first time.

The players' association, which says it is being locked out, offered a five-month no-strike pledge to end the dispute, the union said after Thursday's bargaining session in Chicago.

Management and the union have been without a contract for more than two years and are fighting over money and other issues.

The USSF said it would use the regular national-team players for

the Feb. 9 game at Trinidad and Tobago if the union gave a no-strike pledge through the end of qualifying in November.

**Sixth S. Carolina football player charged with theft**

COLUMBIA, S.C. — A sixth South Carolina football player has been charged with stealing more than \$10,500 worth of computer and video equipment from Williams-Brice Stadium, university officials announced Friday.

Former tight end Brian Brownlee was charged with grand larceny, a felony. An arrest warrant says Brownlee confessed to taking two laptop computers, each valued at \$4,000, and two computer projectors, worth about \$1,675 and \$850.

His lawyers told a judge that all items had been returned and Brownlee, who graduated in December, had turned himself into police. The judge granted Brownlee bond and permission to travel to Atlanta to train for the NFL.

Five players were charged Thursday in the case. Offensive lineman Woody Telford was charged with grand larceny, while quarterbacks Syvelle Newton and Dondrick Pinkins, defensive lineman Freddy Smith-Preux and safety Rodriques Wilson were charged with petit larceny, a misdemeanor.

The thefts, totaling \$18,000, occurred the night of Nov. 22 after the team was informed it would not go to a bowl game as punishment for an on-field brawl with Clemson.

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## High school scoreboard

## Boys basketball

**Kaiserslautern 63, Ramstein 55**  
(Friday at Ramstein)  
**Ramstein** 10 12 17 11-63  
Top scorers: Ramstein: Alan Tremble 14, Clinton Robinson 9, Ramon Alon Tremble 10, Allen Weaver 15, Eric Murray 9.  
**Netwottery** 47, Keweenaw 11, rebounders from Alan Jensen and 10 from Quinton Starmer. Ramstein had 6 rebounds and Murray 6 for Tremble.

**W-J-Kaiserslautern 51, Heidelberg 44, Ramstein 38**  
(Friday at Heidelberg)  
**Ramstein** 10 16 4 6-38  
**Heidelberg** 12 12 12 15-49  
Top scorers: Ramstein: Brandon Reiford, 14, Allen Weaver 15, Shawn Reed 10, Tim Jones 10, Brandon Grant, Damon Fleming 9, T.C. Blanks 8, Tyrone Wesley 6.  
**Netwottery** Heidelberg's Fleming led all rebounders with 10 rebounds and 3 blocked shots. Blanks grabbed 6 rebounds and 3 steals, and Grant added 4 steals and 2 assists. Reiford had 9 rebounds for Ramstein and teammate Alex Tremble added 6.

**IS-48 Wiesbaden 31**  
(Friday at International School of Brussels; scores by quarters unavailable)  
Top scorers: Wies: Robert Edwards 9, Bryce Lee 7, ESB: Guy Gershon 17, Nicholas Foreman 11, Matt McKenna 8.

**Wiesbaden 52, ISB 45**  
(Saturday at International School of Brussels; scores by quarters unavailable)  
Top scorers: Wies: Edwards 23, ESB: Gershon 12, Philip Lippman 11, Foreman 8.

**Division II**  
**Wiesbaden 54, BFA 18**  
(Friday at Wiesbaden)  
**Black Forest Academy** 9 12 16 11-33  
**Wiesbaden** 13 16 16 15-54  
Top scorers: BFA: Ken Reed 10, Brian McCosk 7, Shawn Newby 7, James Johnson 17, Derrick Jones 10, Rodney Morgan 6, Aaron Vernon 6.

**Netwottery** Jones and Kevin Pollock each pulled down 13 rebounds for Wiesbaden. Reed had 7 rebounds for BFA.  
**W-J-BFA 23, Wiesbaden 13**  
(Saturday at Wiesbaden)  
**Black Forest Academy** 9 16 5 6-40  
**Wiesbaden** 12 16 16 15-54  
Top scorers: BFA: Newby 15, Reed 12, McCosk 7, Willis Johnson 18, Jones 8, Vernon 7.  
**Netwottery** Wiesbaden got 7 rebounds from Pollock and 7 from Jones and a steal each from Johnson and Morgan. BFA got 11 rebounds from Reed.

**W-J-BFA 33, Wiesbaden 33**  
(Friday at Hanau)  
**Bittburg** 6 6 6 22-33  
**Hannu** 6 8 8 13-35  
Top scorers: Bitt: Trey Wilson 13, Nick

Brown 13, Perry Hardy 8, Han: Marcus Fortson 18, Xavier James 8.  
**Netwottery** Bittburg made 10 of 11 free throws. Brown led all rebounders with 14. Fortson had 9 rebounds and 3 steals. Hanu had 9 rebounds and Malcolm Lane added 4 steals.

**W-J-Hannu 32, Bittburg 31**  
(Saturday at Bittburg)  
**Hannu** 6 13 6 31-31  
**Bittburg** 10 14 18 48-31  
Top scorers: Bitt: Charles Whitley 10, Brown 7, Han: Jeremy Marshall 24, Lane 10, Fortan 8.

**Netwottery** Bittburg was forced to 3 field goals in the first half. Hanu's Fortan led all rebounders with 11. Brown led Bittburg in rebounding with 10.

**Division II**  
**London Central 63, Alcornbury 50**  
(Friday at High Wycombe, England)  
**Alcornbury** 14 11 12 35-63  
**London Central** 14 11 18 15-63  
Top scorers: AlC: Andrew Hunt 14, Xavier Ferguson 8, Nigel Kelly 8; LC: David Marbury 21, Danny McVie 20, Jesse Ditter 11, Tony Thomas 8.

**Netwottery** McVie had 17 rebounds and Marbury 14 for London Central, which got 8 rebounds from Ditter.

**London Central 62, Alcornbury 46**  
(Saturday at High Wycombe, England)  
**Alcornbury** 14 11 12 35-62  
**London Central** 14 11 18 15-62  
Top scorers: AlC: Ben Davis 12, Hunt 9; LC: McVie 13, Marbury 14, Ditter 21.

**Netwottery** London Central got 12 rebounds from Ditter. Hunt had 11 rebounds. A stormy London game prevented Alcornbury from getting 10 rebounds from Marbury and Thomas from Ditter.

**Alcornbury 45, Baunhomer 28**  
(Friday at Ansbach)  
**Baumhomer** 14 11 12 35-45  
**Ansbach** 14 11 18 15-49  
Top scorers: Baum: Tyrick Byers 11, Chris Bray 8, Mike Denison 8; Ansb: Russell Bailey 14, Brandon Bachtel 12, Tyler Sherman 8.

**Netwottery** Baum's Denison had 11 rebounds with 11 rebounds; Sherman added 8. Bachtel posted 5 steals and Bailey 4 assists for the Cougars.

**W-Ansbach 51, Baumhomer 28**  
**Ansbach 44, Baumhomer 23**  
(Saturday at Ansbach)  
**Baumhomer** 6 4 4 8-23  
**Ansbach** 10 14 12 34-44  
Top scorers: Baum: Bray 9, Denison: Ansb: Bachtel 13, Sherman 11.

**Netwottery** Sherman had 7 rebounds and Moore 5 for Ansbach, which got 4 steals from Damon Outley. Bailey added 4 assists for Ansbach.

**W-Ansbach 51, Baumhomer 30**  
(Saturday at Ansbach)  
**Baumhomer** 6 4 4 8-23  
**Ansbach** 10 14 12 34-44  
Top scorers: Baum: Bray 9, Denison: Ansb: Bachtel 13, Sherman 11.

**Netwottery** Sherman had 7 rebounds and Moore 5 for Ansbach, which got 4 steals from Damon Outley. Bailey added 4 assists for Ansbach.

**Ramstein 56, Hohenfels 41**  
(Friday at Bamberg)  
**Hohenfels** 15 18 15 55-44  
**Bamberg** 12 12 12 35-44  
Top scorers: Hohen: B.J. Denison 14, Mike Tibberty 8, Anthony Marshall 8; Bam: Dillion Bivler 15, Scott Brown 10, Nathan Leno 10.

**Netwottery** Marshall led all rebounders with 10; Denison added 8 for Hohenfels. Bamberg, which won its first game of the season, got 10 rebounds each from Zapata and Miguel Lozada.

**Aviano 76, Naples 63**  
(Friday at Aviano)  
**Naples** 12 16 26-63  
**Aviano** 12 16 26-63  
Top scorers: Napoli: Mark Pearyer 17, Josh Kamitani 15, Andrew Watson 10, Noah Stevenson 10, Avi: Tony Williams 24, Dustin Miller 17, Carl Collins 12.

**Aviano 66, Naples 44**  
(Saturday at Aviano)  
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blocked shots by Ellis. Mannheim lost despite 13 rebounds by Lee. 7 by Khal Brown and 5 by Ricky Poles. Ricky Gaudin made 4 steals and Womble 3 for Mannheim.

**W-J-Kaiserslautern 51, Mannheim 34**  
(Friday at Mannheim)  
**SHAME 66, ISB 52**  
(Saturday at SHAME, Belgium)  
**Int'l Sch. of Brussels** 12 12 16-52  
**SHAME** 8 14 14 28-66  
Top scorers: ISB: Nick Foreman 11, Guy Gershon 8; SHAP: Vernon Fowler 15, Joe Putnam 12.

**Island 75, Sangeret 42**  
(Friday in Keflavik, Iceland)  
**Island** 12 17 17 15-42  
**Sangeret** 12 17 17 15-42  
Top scorers: Sangeret: (club team) unavailable; Is: T.J. Short 19, Brent Baustila 14, Ago Castro 14, Jay Sison 12, Scott Barclay 12.

**Lakehurst 54, AFNORTH 51**  
(Friday at Brunsom, New Jersey)  
**AFNORTH** 12 16 12 35-54  
**Lakehurst** 12 16 12 35-54  
Top scorers: Lake: Josh Muehlmeier 21, Chad Stocker 15, Justin King 13, Arne Schaefer 13, Brian Wainwright 13, Mike Wiley 10, Karim Peterson 10.

**Netwottery** Wiley grabbed 20 rebounds and Preston 17 for AFNORTH.  
**W-J-AFNORTH 24, Lakehurst 23**  
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# Aviano stays undefeated with sweep of rival Naples

BY KENT HARRIS

Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — Only Naples could stop the Aviano boys' high school basketball team last season.

But the Wildcats, who defeated the Saints four times en route to a European Division III championship, didn't fare as well this weekend. Aviano blew open the game Saturday in the second quarter and led 14-0 to a 66-44 victory. That followed a 76-63 win Friday night and helped the Saints improve to 6-0.

"At this point, we're obviously not as good a team as they are," Naples coach Richard Elliott said. "They're extremely athletic at every position and they have balanced scoring, quickness and they hustle."

Junior Dustin Miller, the leading scorer in Europe last year, paced Aviano with 29 points. Carl Cephas added 13 points and 13 rebounds and Tony Williams scored eight. But it was a pair of dunks in the second quarter by Jacques Watson that got the crowd to its feet and helped the Saints pull away.

Watson, the Saints' tallest player at 6-foot-2-inches, had a pair of breakaway layups turned into uncontested stuffs as Aviano out-scored Naples 22-13 to take a 21-point lead at the half.

Miller, normally a deadly outside shooter, couldn't make anything longer than a few feet Saturday. But he scored 13 times on drives to the basket.

Aviano coach Ken McNeely said teams could try to key on him the rest of the year if they want.

"That's OK," he said. "It just opens the door for everyone else."

Everyone else includes Williams, who led the team with 24 points Friday night, and Cephas,

## Boys basketball

a 6-footer whose jumping ability makes him the team's top rebounder. The junior forward had 11 of his 13 points in the first half to help the Saints build their lead.

Naples center Mark Pearyer had 12 points and seven rebounds to lead the Wildcats (4-2). Andrew Watson and John Lenzema each added nine points.

Miller had 17 points and Cephas added 12 Friday night. Pearyer led the Wildcats with 17 points, Josh Kaimikaua scored 15 and Watson and Noah Stevenson each added 10.

In other games of note Friday and Saturday:

**Red Raiders stay unbeaten:** At Mannheim, Division I leader Kaiserslautern ran its record to 6-0 Friday night with a 55-41 victory over Mannheim (6-2) of Division II.

Both of Mannheim's losses have been to Division I teams. Jamal Amini led K-town with 11 points, and Brian Hill and Aaron Ellis grabbed 11 and nine rebounds, respectively. The 6-foot-9-inch Ellis, a junior, also blocked four Mannheim shots.

The Red Raiders were coming off a 63-55 Division I conference victory Wednesday night at Ramstein which gave them a 1-0 conference mark. It was K-town's second victory of the season over Ramstein. On Jan. 8, the Red Raiders downed Ramstein 60-43 at home in a game designated as non-conference.

Earl Lee led Mannheim with 12 points and 13 rebounds.

**London Central sweeps Alconbury:** At High Wycombe, England, London Central (5-1) won both of its Division II games (11-North) got big efforts from dormitory students David Marbury and Danny Melville in claiming

63-50 and 62-46 victories over visiting Alconbury on Friday and Saturday.

Marbury burned Alconbury (0-2) for 21 points and 14 rebounds on Friday in a non-conference game; Melville added 20 points and 17 rebounds.

In Saturday's conference game, Melville led the way with 19 points, 12 rebounds, four steals and four assists. Marbury added 14 points and five rebounds.

**Same size suits Bamberg:** Dillon Baker scored 16 points and Kris Starr and Carlos Zapata added 10 each as homestanding Bamberg won its first game of the season in its first game against a Division III school.

Bamberg had lost its first six games, all against Division I or Division II schools: Hohenfels (2-6; 1-1 III-South), which had lost all five of its games against Division I and II opponents, suffered its first loss of the season against a D-II team.

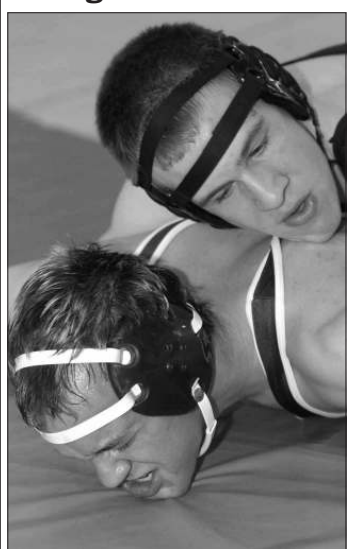
**Ansbach retains III-South lead:** At Ansbach, the unbeaten in Division III Cougars (5-2; 2-0 III-South) romped past the Baumholder Bucs 49-29 on Friday and 44-23 on Saturday.

All-Europe returnee Russell Bailey led the way in scoring both days. He scored 14 points with six rebounds and four assists on Friday, then came back in Saturday's III-South conference game with 11 points and four assists. Baumholder fell to 1-7 overall and 0-2 in III-South.

**Vilseck stays in D-II hunt:** At Vilseck, Jmaal Johnson scored 17 points in Friday's 54-38 conquest of Black Forest Academy and 18 in Saturday's 46-40 Division II victory.

The Falcons (5-1; 2-1 Div. II) stayed within reach of Division II leader Mannheim, which won both of its Division II games. Black Forest Academy fell to 4-4 (1-2).

## Taking it on the chin



RAYMOND T. CONWAY/Stars and Stripes

**AFNORTH's Matthew Hall** uses his chin for leverage while trying to get out from under Lakenheath's Craig Normann during a 160-pound high school wrestling match in Wiesbaden, Germany, on Saturday. Normann won the match 6-5.

# Naples earns inside track to Italy regular-season championship

BY KENT HARRIS

Stars and Stripes

AVIANO AIR BASE, Italy — It won't go down as one of the highlight reels involving the history of girls high school basketball.

But Naples' 37-33 victory over Aviano on Saturday — coupled with a 47-42 Wildcats victory Friday night — will likely go down as the highlight of the Naples regular season in Italy high school basketball.

"I take the win," Naples coach Craig Load said. "It wasn't pretty. That's for sure."

If recent history is any indication, the sweep should give Naples the regular-season championship in Italy, even though more than half the season is left to play. Naples and Aviano, which both entered the weekend unbeaten, have shared the title every year since 2000.

Naples came back from a six-point deficit as player after player went to the bench for foul trouble for Aviano.

Michelle Aguilu's offensive rebound and basket with 1:34 left put the Wildcats up for good at

## Girls basketball

34-33. Mikal Willmer — who finished with a game-high 17 points — added two free throws a few seconds later, and the Saints didn't score again. Four Aviano players fouled out of the game and two others finished with four fouls.

"We're just so physical," Aviano coach Laura Cordier-Chavez said. "And in doing that, we let ourselves get out of whatever we're trying to do."

The first half was an extended free-throw shooting contest. Naples made 10 of 20 attempts, while Aviano hit seven of 21. Each team finished with almost as many turnovers as points. Naples had 36 and Aviano 29.

Michelle Brown added eight points and 13 rebounds for Naples (6-0). Willmer had 11 rebounds and two blocks. Kassie Mangosing and Mavis Sanders each had 11 to lead Aviano (6-2).

On Friday night, Willmer had 13 points and Renna Damo 11 to lead Naples.

Mangosing, with 14 and Cheri McNeely with 11 points and 12 rebounds, led Aviano.

In other games Friday and Saturday:

**Ansbach rolls on:** At Ansbach, the Cougars (5-2; 2-0 III-South) claimed 42-27 and 49-16 victories over Baumholder.

Ansbach's Keke Johnson and Britney Britton easily won their duel against Baumholder's Tish Schellhas. Johnson scored 16 points and stole the ball five times on Friday and scored eight points with three steals and three assists on Saturday. Britton added 10 points on Friday and chalked up 13 points, 12 rebounds and five assists Saturday.

Schellhas scored six points on Friday and had seven points, 10 rebounds and five steals Saturday for Baumholder (3-5; 0-2 III-South).

**K-town keeps it perfect:** At Mannheim, Kaiserslautern turned back Mannheim (6-2; 2-0 Div. II) 51-30 on Friday and improved to 6-0.

Bianca Gerena-Perez did all the heavy lifting for the Division I

leaders in this non-conference game, scoring 20 points and snaring 11 rebounds.

Lynndsey Hyter added eight rebounds and four steals for K-town, which is assured of staying unbeaten for at least the rest of this month. The Lady Raiders next play at Heidelberg on Feb. 1.

**Heidelberg upsets Ramstein:** At Heidelberg, the Lady Lions won their fourth straight game under new coach Jon Mitten-zwey, 56-54 Friday night over the Ramstein Lady Royals.

Ree Ree Washington scored 17 points, Shalanda Larry 14 and Germaine Calvin 12 for Heidelberg (4-4).

Krissy Grosslein scored 23 points for Ramstein (5-3).

**London Central, Alconbury split:** At High Wycombe, England, a late bucket by London Central's Kelsey Anderson capped a comeback from a 22-5 halftime deficit and forced overtime Friday night as the Lady Bobcats downed the visiting and previously unbeaten Alconbury Dragons 40-39.

On Saturday, Alconbury (5-1;

1-0 III-North) bounced back for a third straight game and scored 12 points Friday, and added 22 points and eight steals from Carly Bascom.

**Vilseck posts sweep:** Homestanding Vilseck (3-1; 2-1 Div. II) battered Black Forest Academy 46-13 on Friday and 53-24 on Saturday.

LaPorche Sanders made four three-pointers and scored 12 points Friday, and added 22 on Saturday.

BFA is 2-6 (0-4 in Div. II).

**Hanau batters Bittburg:** Hanau reversed the outcome of last season's European Division II title game with two easy victories over visiting Bittburg.

On Friday, the Lady Panthers battered the Lady Buoys 52-12 behind 23 points from Katsisha Fauntleroy.

On Saturday, Fauntleroy scored 23 points as Hanau won 48-15.

Kyri Bye-Nagel added 18 points on Friday and 17 points on Saturday for Hanau (6-1 overall; 3-0 in Div. II), which got 12 rebounds and three blocks from Fauntleroy on Friday and 17 rebounds and five blocks Saturday.



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## SPORTS



Hall of Fame coach Wilkens  
steps away from  
Knicks' bench, Page 38

# Boom or bust — again — in Philly

## Eagles fighting a frightening playoff history

BY ROB MAADDI  
The Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA — Andy Reid is tired of going to Hawaii.

For the past three years, Reid and the rest of the Philadelphia Eagles' coaching staff have spent the week after the Super Bowl in Honolulu leading the NFL's Pro Bowl team, the result of losing the conference championship game.

Reid will gladly trade those floral shirts and leis for a trip to Jacksonville this year.

"I never thought I'd say I don't want to go to Hawaii," Reid said. "You get to this point, you really aren't that worried about what happened in the past. You are so focused in on what you need to do right now and the type of things that you are doing right now."

Playing in the past three NFL championship games gives the Eagles a significant edge over Atlanta in big-game experience.

Losing all three of those games also puts all the pressure on Philadelphia to get to the Super Bowl for the first time in 24 years.

The Falcons, meanwhile, have far less to lose. A year ago, they were 5-11. Now they're a victory away from the second Super Bowl appearance in franchise history; the other was in 1999.

"We're just going to go up there and play loose and let it roll," Falcons rookie coach Jim Mora said. "We don't feel any pressure. It's house money we're gambling with. So we're just going to go up there and fling it around and see if we can't stay on the field with them for a little while."

The Eagles have traveled this road before, only to get dethroned at the last stop before playing for the NFL title. They were favorites at home the past two years against teams which played in a warmer climate and had trouble winning on the road and in cold weather.

It could be downright freezing when the Eagles (14-3) host the Falcons (12-5) on Sunday afternoon, with forecasters calling for snow.

"I don't think it'll be a factor," Falcons quarterback Michael Vick said. "Football is played in all types of conditions: rain, sleet, snow or whatever. The game is not going to be called off. This is for all the marbles."

SEE HISTORY, ON PAGE 36

### Out of reach

Since losing to Oakland in the Super Bowl on Jan. 25, 1981, the Eagles are 8-11 in the playoffs. Here's a look at some of the setbacks:

#### NFL championship games

2003 — 14-3 in Carolina

2002 — 27-10 to Tampa Bay

2001 — 29-24 at St. Louis

Divisional round

2000 — 20-10 at N.Y. Giants

1996 — 30-11 at Dallas

1992 — 34-10 at Dallas

1988 — 20-12 at Chicago

Wild-card round

1990 — 20-6 to Washington

1981 — 27-21 to N.Y. Giants

Note: Year denotes season, not date of game



Eagles QB  
Donovan  
McNabb (5)  
gets a lift from  
lineman  
Hank Fraley.

AP

## Kearse will be chasing Vick and the Super Bowl

BY JASON LA CANFORA  
The Washington Post

PHILADELPHIA — On Monday morning, the Philadelphia Eagles' day off, defensive end Jevon Kearse showed up at the team's training facility with only one thing on his mind. He was seeking out Tommy Brasher, the team's defensive line coach, to lobby for a more integral role in the game plan for Sunday's NFC championship game, volunteering to shadow Atlanta's gifted quarterback, Michael Vick.

Kearse did not want to reveal too much about the outcome of that meeting when speaking with the media this week — secrecy, after all, is a hallmark of the NFL — but his huge smile and hearty chuckle gave plenty away.

While the Eagles will not use a spy to follow Vick on every play, when they do, that player frequently will be Kearse, who has quickness and pass-rushing ability to go with his size (6 feet 4, 265 pounds).

Philadelphia signed the three-time Pro Bowler to an eight-year, \$66 million contract on the first day of free agency last year with precisely this game in mind, believing Kearse's impact on its defense would help end the team's three-year habit of losing in the NFC title game.

The Eagles once again will be a single afternoon away from their first trip to the Super Bowl since 1981, and Kearse figures to be at the center of the effort to contain Vick, who is considered by many to be the best pure runner in football and whose unpredictable quarterbacking style makes him the league's biggest wild card. Kearse expects to line up at right and left defensive end, and he plans to beat him from getting to the outside and taking off on highlight-reel runs that are his specialty.

SEE KEARSE ON PAGE 37



AP

Philadelphia signed three-time Pro Bowl end Jevon Kearse to an eight-year, \$66 million contract last year and he led the team with 7½ sacks.



Kaiserslautern,  
Aviano boys,  
Ansbach girls  
stay unbeaten

Pages 41, 42

Brady familiar with a  
rookie QB's plight Page 34

Anticipated McNabb-Vick matchup  
significant on several levels Page 37



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